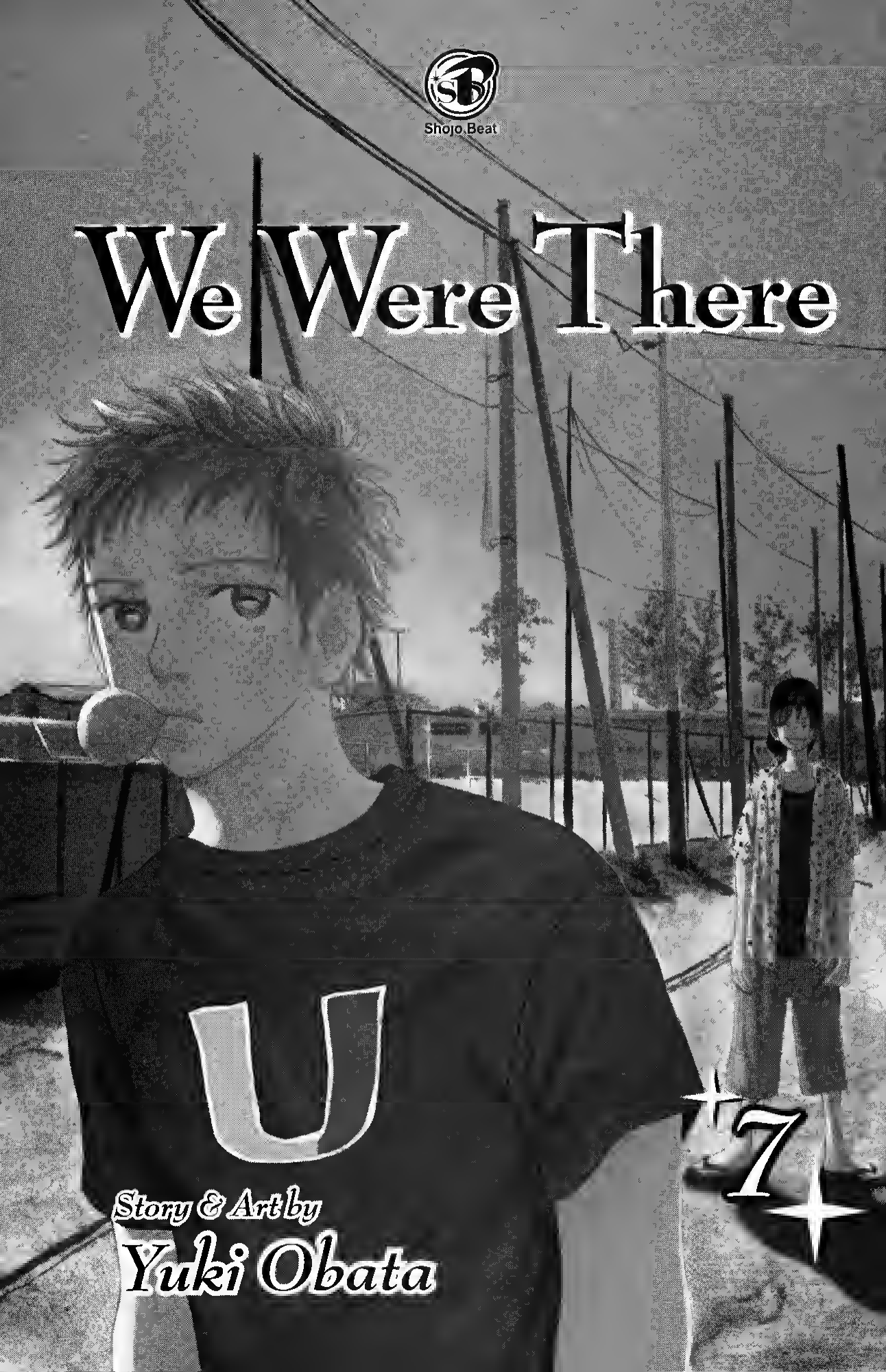
Shojo Beat
We Were There
U
7
Story & Art by
Yuki Obata

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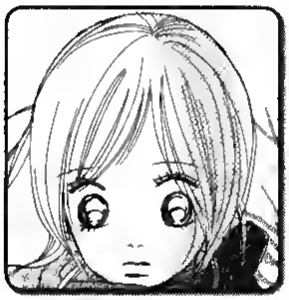
Characters

Masafumi Takeuchi
Yano's childhood friend. He's kinder and more modest than Yano.



Nanami Takahashi
She's earnest but a bit forgetful at times.

Motoharu Yano
Nanami's popular classmate. His girlfriend Nana-san died.

Story

Nanami had broken up with Yano because he could not forget about his girlfriend who died. But Nanami made the decision to believe in him once again, and now she is more honest about her feelings than she was before. Takeuchi would do anything to gain Nanami's affection, but after having lost to Yano, he has chosen to watch over the couple...

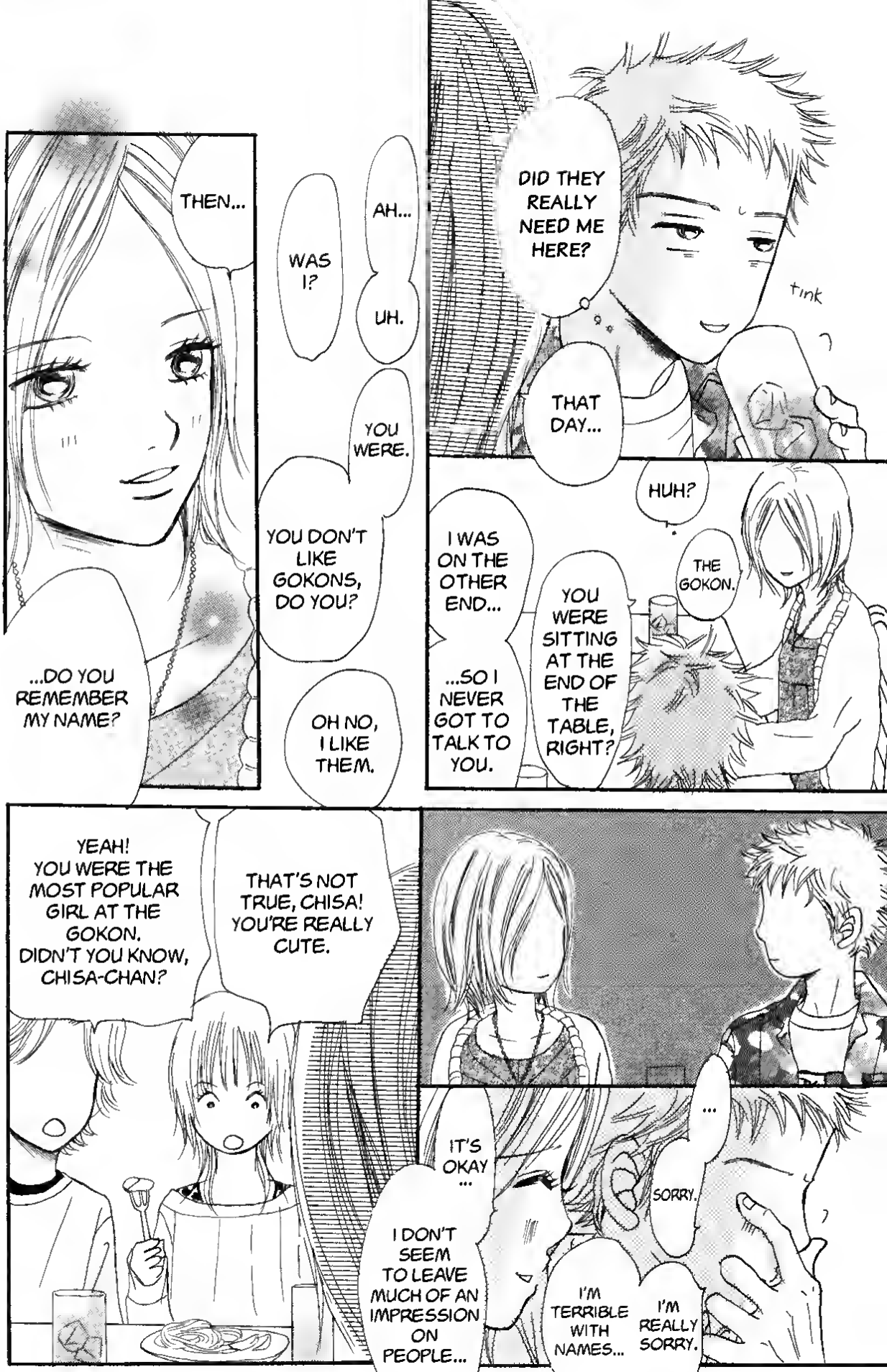
Chapter 24

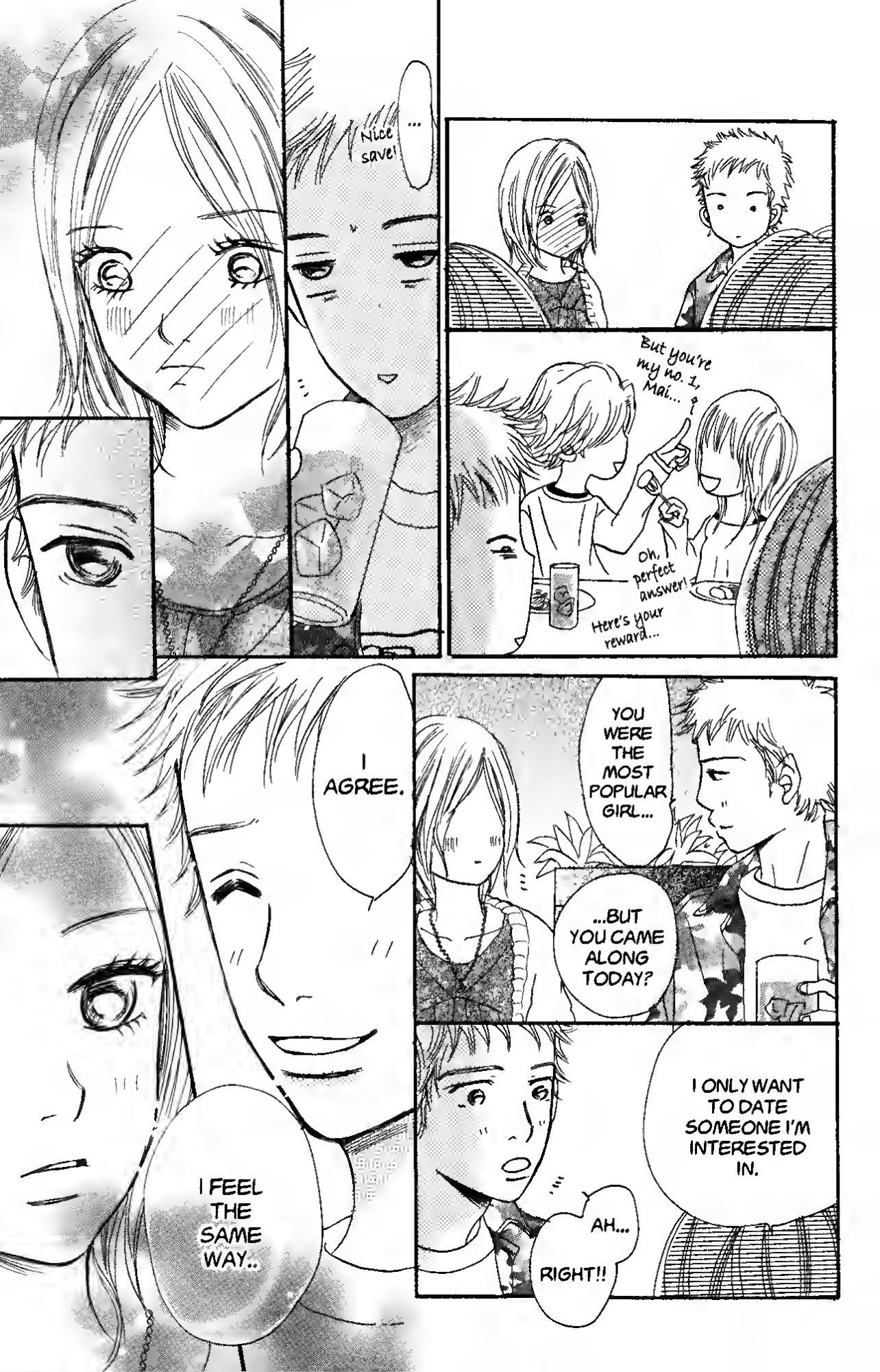
SO THEN...
NOT ME! SHE IS!!
YOU DON'T GET EMBARRASSED ABOUT THOSE THINGS.
swik
...SORT OF EMBARRASSING TO SEE EACH OTHER ONE-ON-ONE.
BUT IT'S...
YEAH. I MADE PLANS TO HANG OUT WITH HER THIS WEEKEND.
SEE YOU TOMORROW IN FRONT OF THE STATION AT 1:30, OKAY?!
...
zak
PLEASE !!
Pretty please?
SO CAN YOU COME ALONG TOO?
I don't want to.
HUH? GO ON YOUR OWN.
...SHE ASKED ME IF SHE COULD BRING A FRIEND ALONG.
YOU'RE THE ONLY GUY WHO ISN'T DOING ANYTHING.
FIND SOMEONE ELSE...
We're friends, aren't we?
OKAY ?
JUST FOR HALF A DAY.
Look how much I got...

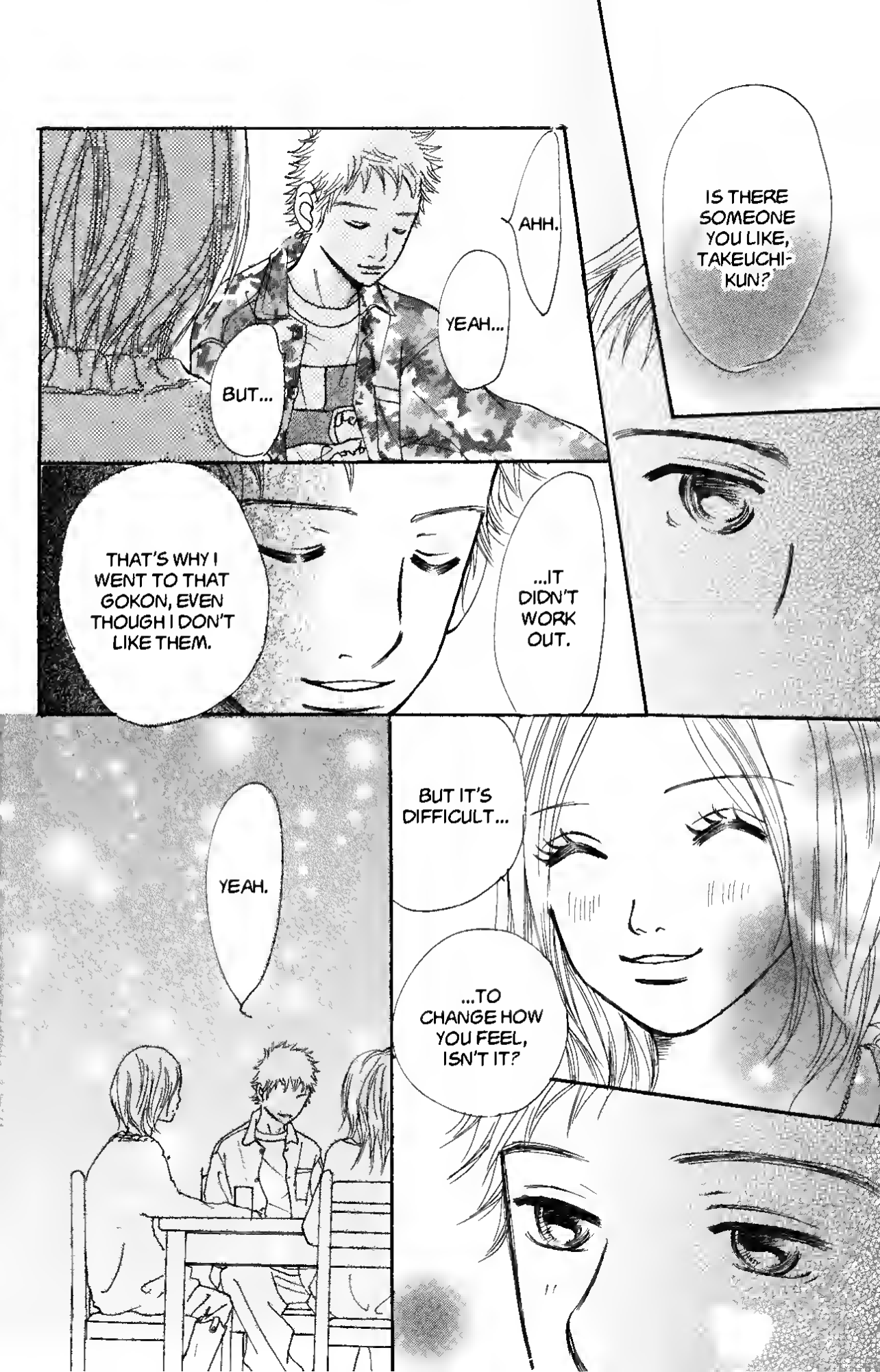
...
YANO.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO WEAR THIS SUNDAY?
HUH?
WHY?
OH...
...THAT.
It looks a lot like mine.
SURE, WHY NOT?
IT WOULD LOOK LAME IF WE WORE MATCHING JACKETS...
WHAT'S WRONG WITH WEARING MATCHING CLOTHES?
I WAS THINKING ABOUT WEARING MY ATHLETIC JACKET IF YOU WEREN'T GOING TO WEAR YOURS.
My red one.

HMPH
HA HA
HUH?
NO!
DON'T YOU DARE!
HI!
...
HI THERE... ♡

You want to get something to eat?
...
Yeah, that sounds great.
THIS IS MY FRIEND.
...
HEY.
You met him there too.
OH. HELLO.
LET'S GET GOING.
VMP
WE'RE BOTH THIRD WHEELS TODAY...
...
LET'S HAVE FUN, OKAY?
AH.
SURE.
YEAH.
No prob. I'll get you whatever you want, Mai.
HEE HEE
I don't really like spicy stuff...
...
HA HA HA HA
What shall we eat?
...
Here. Open up...
Okay!


DID THEY REALLY NEED ME HERE?
tink
THAT DAY...
HUH?
THE GOKON.
YOU WERE SITTING AT THE END OF THE TABLE, RIGHT?
I WAS ON THE OTHER END...
...SO I NEVER GOT TO TALK TO YOU.
...
SORRY.
I'M REALLY SORRY.
I'M TERRIBLE WITH NAMES...
IT'S OKAY ...
I DON'T SEEM TO LEAVE MUCH OF AN IMPRESSION ON PEOPLE...
THAT'S NOT TRUE, CHISA! YOU'RE REALLY CUTE.
YEAH! YOU WERE THE MOST POPULAR GIRL AT THE GOKON. DIDN'T YOU KNOW, CHISA-CHAN?
OH NO, I LIKE THEM.
YOU DON'T LIKE GOKONS, DO YOU?
YOU WERE.
AH...
UH.
WAS I?
THEN...
...DO YOU REMEMBER MY NAME?


...
Nice save!
But you're my no. 1, Mai...
Oh, perfect answer!
Here's your reward...
YOU WERE THE MOST POPULAR GIRL...
...BUT YOU CAME ALONG TODAY?
I ONLY WANT TO DATE SOMEONE I'M INTERESTED IN.
AH... RIGHT!!
I AGREE.
I FEEL THE SAME WAY..


IS THERE SOMEONE YOU LIKE, TAKEUCHI-KUN?
AHH.
YEAH...
BUT...
...IT DIDN'T WORK OUT.
THAT'S WHY I WENT TO THAT GOKON, EVEN THOUGH I DON'T LIKE THEM.
BUT IT'S DIFFICULT...
...TO CHANGE HOW YOU FEEL, ISN'T IT?
YEAH.

TUG
!
That was yummy!
Anywhere you want, Mai-chan...
Where are we going next?
EH?
SSH.
Thanks for the meal.
DITCHING SUC-CESSFUL!
I'M SURE THEY'RE FINE WITHOUT US.
HUH?
LET'S BAIL.
AND HE SAID BEING ONE-ON-ONE WAS EMBAR-RASSING!
What a joke!!

BYE!!
HUH?
YOU MUST BE TIRED.
MY BUS STOP IS THIS WAY, SO...
SO, UM...
...TAKE CARE...
...MIYATA-SAN.
WAIT!

IT WAS ALL A LIE.
I HAD THOSE TWO SET THIS WHOLE THING UP.
EVERY-THING.
I'M THE ONE WHO WANTED TO MEET YOU.
I NEVER GOT THE CHANCE TO TALK TO YOU THE OTHER DAY, SO...
AND AFTER MEETING AND TALKING TO YOU TODAY...
...YOU'RE EXACTLY LIKE I THOUGHT YOU'D BE...
I KNOW YOU DON'T LIKE BLIND DATES...
...A REALLY, REALLY GREAT GUY.
I'M SORRY FOR LYING...
...BUT...
...AND SETTING YOU UP LIKE THIS.
...WOULD YOU KEEP SEEING ME FOR JUST A LITTLE LONGER?

COULD YOU PLEASE GIVE ME A CHANCE...
...FOR JUST ONE MONTH?
Hyuu...
...
HMM.
...LALA.
GET OFF.
IT'S HOT.
YOU'RE HEAVY...

You're heavy.
LALA-MI...
LALA...
PANT
UHH.
...
NANA...
NANA-MI...
JUST KID-DING.
DON'T GET ON TOP.
YOU'RE HEAVY.
AARGH
A BRIGHT AND REFRESH-ING SUNDAY MORNING
WHY ARE YOU HERE SO EARLY?
WE NEED TO BORROW YOUR ROOM TODAY, OKAY?
HUH?
IT'S A PARTY!
TO CELE-BRATE TAKE-CHAN'S VERY FIRST GIRL-FRIEND!!
Oh, he's here.
HUH?
A GIRL ASKED HIM TO TRY DATING HER FOR ONE MONTH.
Cute, right?

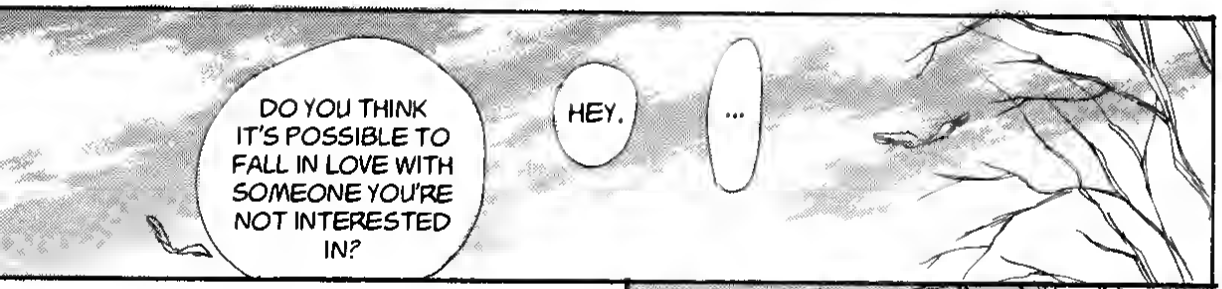
NO ONE CAN REFUSE THAT!!
Hey, get your cracker ready.
DON'T YOU THINK A DEADLINE MAKES IT MORE EXCITING?
You can't know unless you start going out with the girl anyway.
POK
Yay!
CONGRATULATIONS!
Woo hoo!
I'VE GOT TO BE SOMEPLACE TODAY...
FOOL.

HONEST ...
I FORGOT ...
ATHLETIC JACKET
...
I DIDN'T DO IT ON PURPOSE.
Really!
I grabbed a jacket, and it just happened to be this one.
SOMETHING CAME UP RIGHT BEFORE I LEFT HOME.
SO WHAT WAS IT?
YOU DON'T LISTEN TO ANYTHING I SAY, DO YOU?
SORRY.
AND I TOLD YOU SO MANY TIMES THE OTHER DAY.
SORRY ...
PHOOO
POKE
HEY!
WE'LL GO WHEREVER YOU WANT.
...
...
NANA-CHAN...
SORRY ...
...NANA-CHAN.

Hmph.
FORGIVE ME?
I'm not falling for that one.
Oh, think so?
Put your jacket back on.
PET LAND
WOOF
WOOF
MEOW
Look— a Corgi.
PARAKEET
TWEET
TWEET
Nah.. My Lalami is the cutest.
SO CUTE! SO CUTE! SO CUTE!

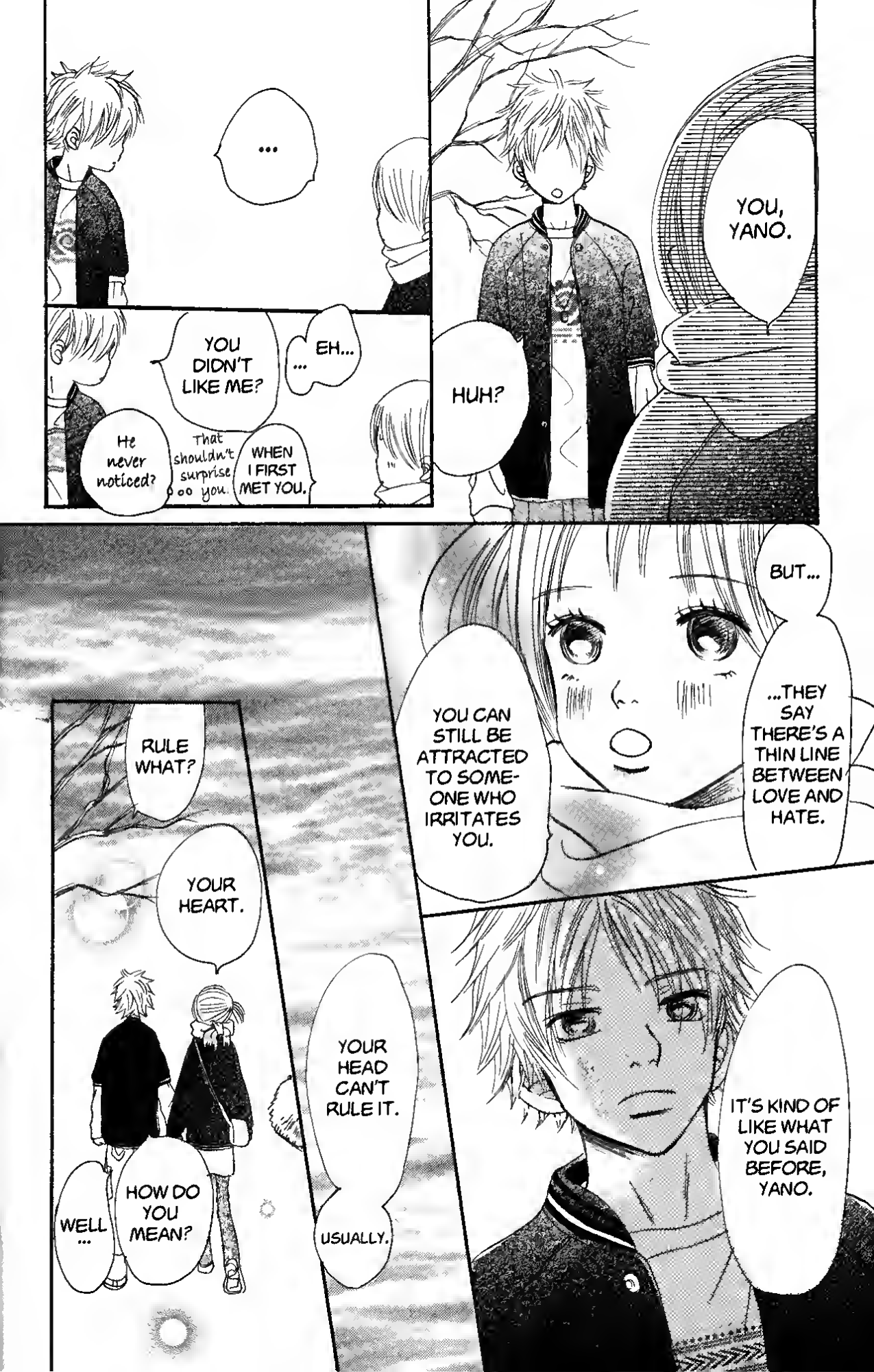
I WANT A CORGI.
ENRICHING, HUH.
PHEW
SIGH
THAT WAS SO FUN!
THE CATS WERE CUTE TOO.
BUT MY LALAMI IS STILL THE BEST.

Hee!
I'll use this for my cell wallpaper
Wait.
They have squirrels over there.


DO YOU THINK IT'S POSSIBLE TO FALL IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED IN?
HEY.
...

I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE I DIDN'T LIKE.
WHO?
REALLY?
...AND FORCE YOURSELF TO FALL FOR THAT PERSON.

WHAT?
WHAT BROUGHT THIS UP?
WHAT I MEAN IS...
...IF YOU START GOING OUT WITH SOMEONE YOU DON'T LIKE...

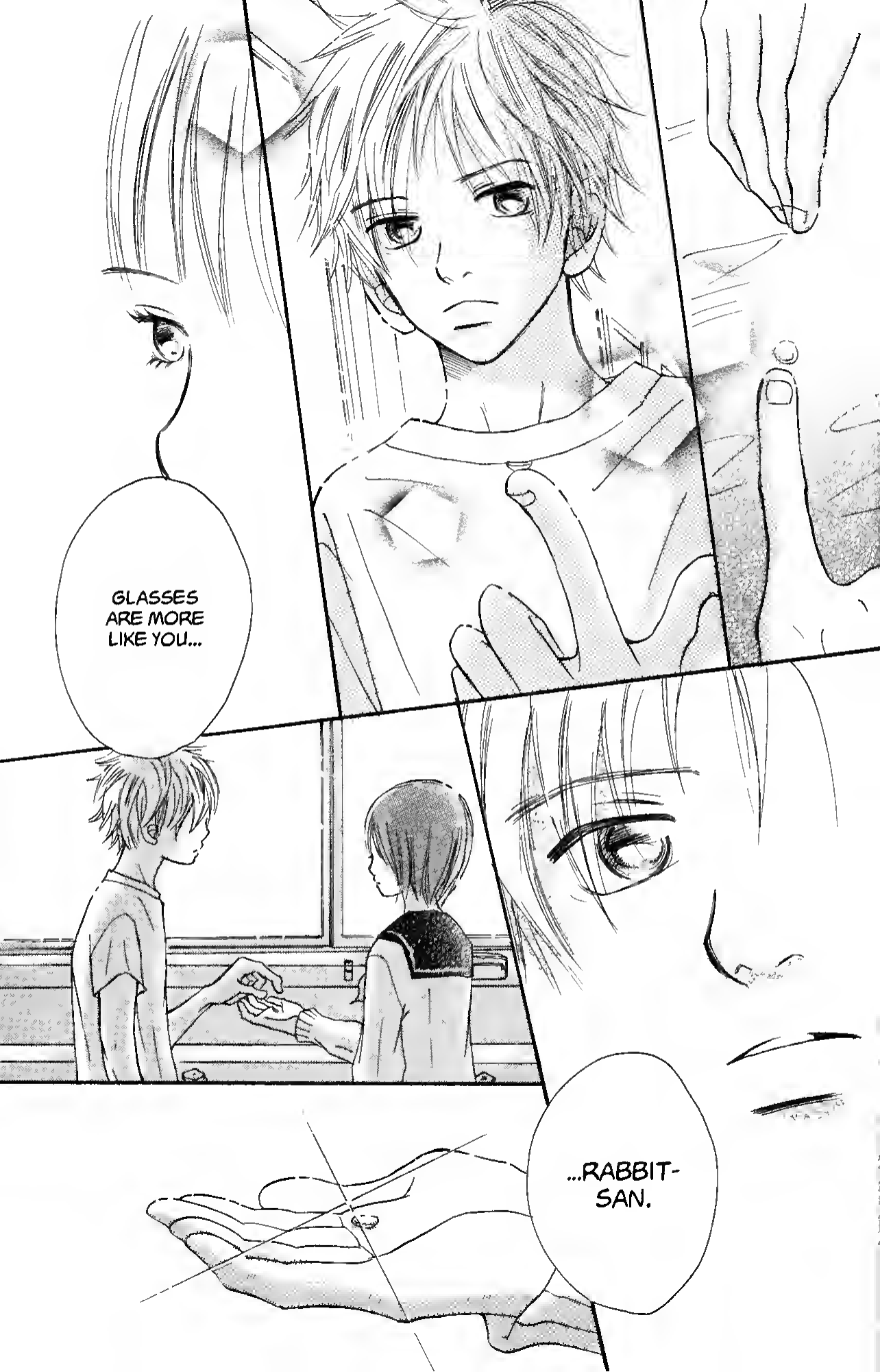

...
YOU DIDN'T LIKE ME?
EH... ...
He never noticed?
That shouldn't surprise you...
WHEN I FIRST MET YOU.
HUH?
YOU, YANO.
BUT...
...THEY SAY THERE'S A THIN LINE BETWEEN LOVE AND HATE.
YOU CAN STILL BE ATTRACTED TO SOMEONE WHO IRRITATES YOU.
IT'S KIND OF LIKE WHAT YOU SAID BEFORE, YANO.
YOUR HEAD CAN'T RULE IT.
USUALLY.
RULE WHAT?
YOUR HEART.
WELL...
HOW DO YOU MEAN?

HUH?
They match! That is so lame!
PBFF
It's fine. Don't worry about what those girls said.
blush
I'm not walking beside you anymore!
LIKE WHEN YOUR BOYFRIEND IS SUCH A MORON YOU WANT TO KILL HIM!!
FEELINGS WIN OUT IN THE END.
BUT JUST HIS SMILE WILL MAKE YOU FORGIVE HIM.

FALLING IN LOVE...
...ISN'T SOMETHING YOU CAN PLAN.
THAT'S ...
HUG
!!
...WHAT HE NEEDS TO BE TOLD.
HUH?
NOTHING.

I LOVE YOU...
...NANA-CHAN.
HA HA HA

MAYBE IT ISN'T FOR YOU?
WEARING CON-TACTS.
Shwaa
skrik
I KEEP GETTING DUST IN MY EYES.
I'M JUST NOT USED TO THEM, THAT'S ALL.
!
blush
plup
HEH
YOUR EYES ARE BRIGHT RED LIKE A RABBIT'S.


GLASSES ARE MORE LIKE YOU...
...RABBIT-SAN.

YOU NEED ANOTHER BALL?
HA HA HA
KLAK
HEY.
MOTO.

...
I'M NOT.
THERE ARE THINGS YOU CAN'T TELL...
...UNTIL YOU GO OUT WITH THAT PERSON, RIGHT?
WHY ARE YOU SO PISSED ABOUT IT?
...
HM.
SO AFTER YOU GO OUT WITH HER FOR A MONTH, YOU SAY...
"OH, LIKE I THOUGHT, IT'S NOT GOING TO WORK OUT."
"I COULDN'T FALL IN LOVE WITH YOU."
"SORRY ABOUT THAT."
THEN IT WOULD BE BETTER IF YOU HAD REFUSED IN THE BEGINNING!
HEY!

FWOK
"I'LL GO OUT WITH YOU FOR A MONTH" IS THE SAME THING AS SAYING "I'LL BE GOING OUT WITH YOU AFTER A MONTH."
I GET IT.
THAT'S SOME-THING...
...I'VE BEEN READY FOR FROM THE START.
I'm not that dumb, stupid.
SO YOU'RE GOING OUT WITH HER EVEN THOUGH YOU DON'T LIKE HER?
OH...?
TALK ABOUT BEING CHARITA-BLE.
I'M GOING OUT WITH HER TO FALL IN LOVE WITH HER.
YOU'LL NEVER FALL IN LOVE WITH HER.
WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE?
YOU'VE NEVER FALLEN FOR A GIRL WHO LIKED YOU FIRST.
I MIGHT THIS TIME, YOU KNOW?
YOU WON'T. I'D BET ON IT.

THEN WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?
IT'S A WASTE OF TIME GOING OUT WITH A GIRL YOU DON'T LIKE.
HEH
YOU'RE ...
...ONE TO TALK.
TONG
...SHOULD JUST BE THINKING ABOUT HOW NOT TO MAKE YOUR GIRLFRIEND CRY.
YOU...
Oh!

KLAK
...
UH.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
IT'S THE HOTTEST AND COOLEST STYLE THIS AUTUMN.
WE...
WE'RE DISCUSSING HAIRSTYLES.
SHOULDN'T YOU GROW YOUR SIDES OUT A BIT MORE?
...
ESPECIALLY THE LEFT.
I THOUGHT SO TOO.
ASYMMETRY IS THE WAY TO GO.
...
...
IS...
...IS THAT YANO'S HAIR?
Y...
YOU'RE LOSING HAIR THESE DAYS, YOU KNOW?
Here you go.
TH...
THAT'S BAD, HUH.
I'll eat kelp
BLOOD...

YOU GUYS WERE FIGHTING, WEREN'T YOU?
OF COURSE NOT!
LICK
THERE. ALL BETTER.
OH, THANKS.
HUH?
TAKEUCHI-KUN, YOU'RE BLEEDING.
LOOK.
PIYO
TOING
Ahhh!
I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY. AND YOU'RE RIGHT.
I'M THE ONE WHO ALWAYS SAYS TOO MUCH ANYWAY.
...
IT'S OKAY.
MOTO, I SAID TOO MUCH JUST NOW.
SORRY.

YOU HAVE TO UNDER-STAND THAT.
...MOVE ON TOO.
BUT I'VE GOT TO...
WHOLE-SOME...
...
...NOT AS CUTE...
...MORE MELLOW...
KANNO ?
MIHO KANNO ...
HUH?
WHAT'S SHE LIKE?
I'M SURE SHE'S...
...A NICE PERSON.

TAKA-HASHI...
...OVER HERE!!
I BROUGHT YOUR NOTEBOOK.
YOU COULD HAVE GIVEN IT TO ME TOMORROW AT SCHOOL.
You didn't have to come by this late.
IT'S FINE.
AND...
...A MEAT BUN!
A MEAT BUN?

WHY AREN'T YOU HAPPY ABOUT IT?
...
THAT'S NOT RIGHT, YANO.

I HEARD THAT TAKEUCHI-KUN HAS A GIRLFRIEND NOW.

I WANT TAKE...

WHAT'S THAT SUP-POSED TO MEAN?
That's crazy.
WELL ...
IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN, BUT...
It's irresponsible...

BUT IT'S NOT LIKE HIM.
YOU KNOW ...
I THINK MAKING AN EFFORT TO FALL IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE IS OKAY TOO.

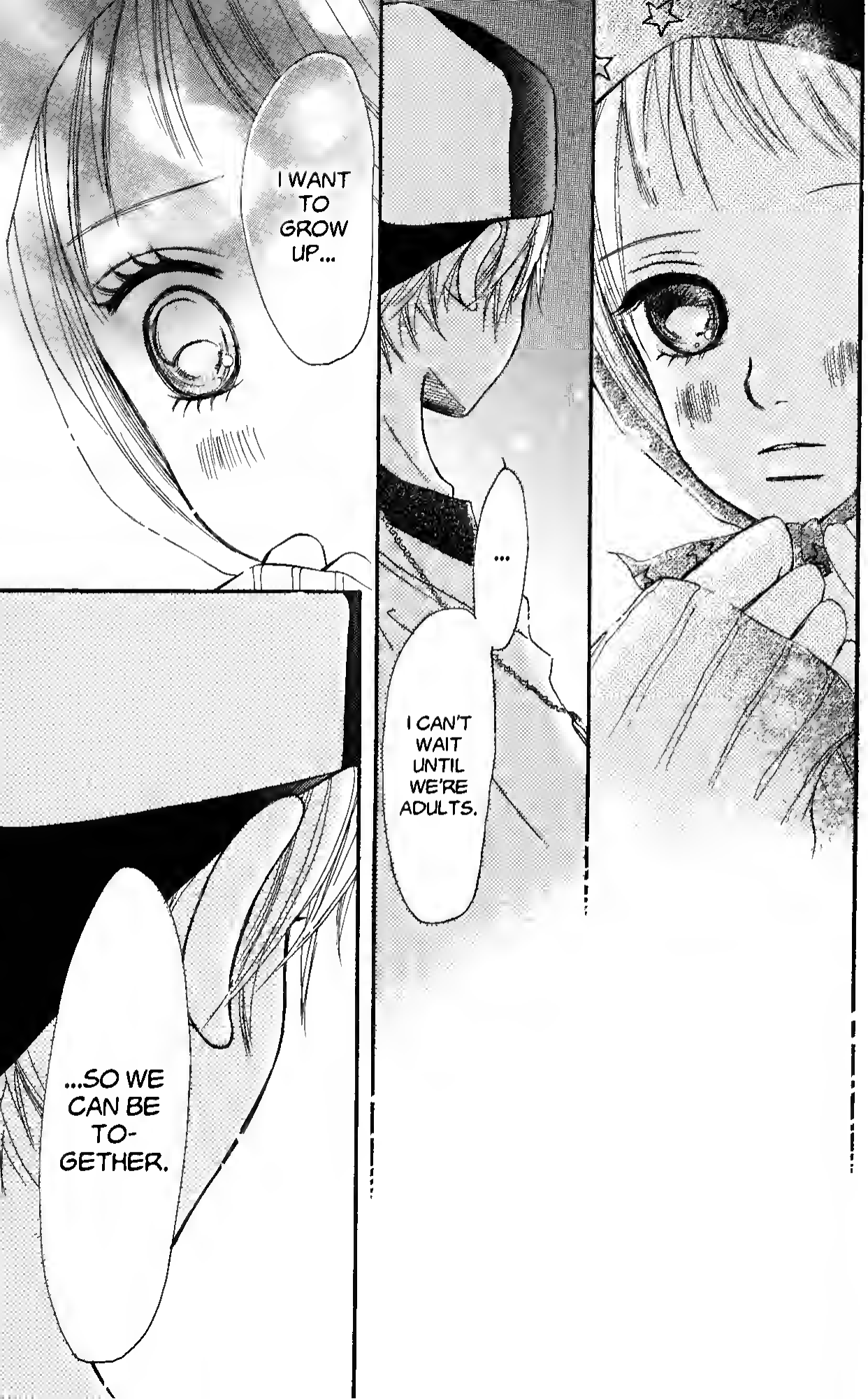
YOU KNOW...
...WHAT A GREAT GUY HE IS, RIGHT?
...TO GO OUT WITH A GIRL...
...HE REALLY LOVES.
...
YES.
IT'LL DEFINITELY BE OKAY!
IT'LL BE OKAY!
SHE MUST REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT A GOOD GUY TAKEUCHI-KUN IS!

HUH?
WHAT?
IS YOUR HAIR WET?
OH. IT MIGHT BE.
I TOOK A BATH.
I'M FINE. THEN YOU'LL CATCH COLD.
I HAVE LAYERS ON, SO I'LL BE FINE.
Kyah!
Hug!
THEN YOU WANT ME TO WARM YOU?
OTHER PEOPLE MAY PASS BY— STOP!
HA HA HA.
YOU'LL CATCH COLD.
Are you in pajamas?
WEAR MY SWEATER.

SHE'S ...
...NOT WEARING A BRA...
?
?
...
?
...
?
OH.
come to think of it...
I HAVE A BANDANNA IN MY POCKET.
There I won't catch cold.
SWIP
LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD.
TAKA-HASHI...
I WANT TO GO ON A TRIP WITH YOU.

I MEANT...
...JUST...
...SOME-WHERE WE CAN BE ALL ALONE.
AH.
IT'S OKAY. I KNOW.
WE CAN'T GO ON ONE YET.
THERE'S NO RUSH.
I DIDN'T MEAN IT THAT WAY.

SOMEWHERE NOBODY WILL GET IN OUR WAY.
WHERE WE DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT GETTING BACK HOME...
...OR SAYING GOODBYE TO EACH OTHER THAT DAY.


I WANT TO GROW UP...
...
I CAN'T WAIT UNTIL WE'RE ADULTS.
...SO WE CAN BE TO-GETHER.

IT'D BE NICE...
...IF ETERNITY EXISTED.
IT DOES.

IT DOES...
I'M SURE OF IT.

WE WERE STILL YOUNG, AND WE CARRIED ETERNITY IN OUR HEARTS.

...IT LASTED FOREVER BUT WAS GONE IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE.

THE MOMENT SEEMED SO REAL, YET SO LIKE A DREAM...

WE WERE THE ONLY TWO PEOPLE IN THE ENTIRE WORLD...

BUT BACK THEN, TIME HAD STOPPED...

...AFTER OUR CHILDLIKE BELIEF IN ETERNITY FADED...

...LONG AFTER WE BECAME ADULTS...

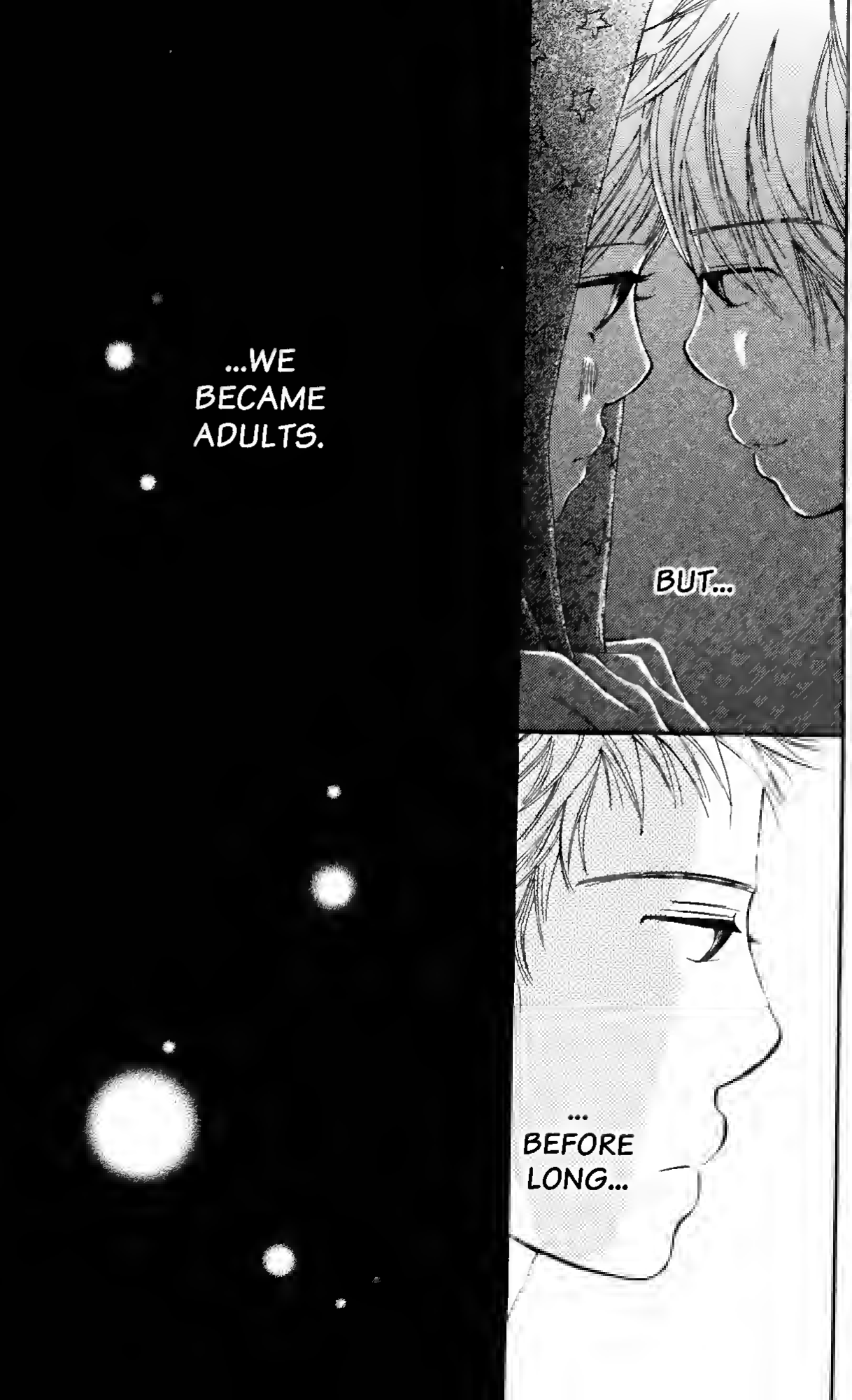
I CAN STILL REMEMBER IT CLEARLY EVEN NOW...

THAT 17-YEAR-OLD BOY WHO TOLD ME ETERNITY EXISTS...

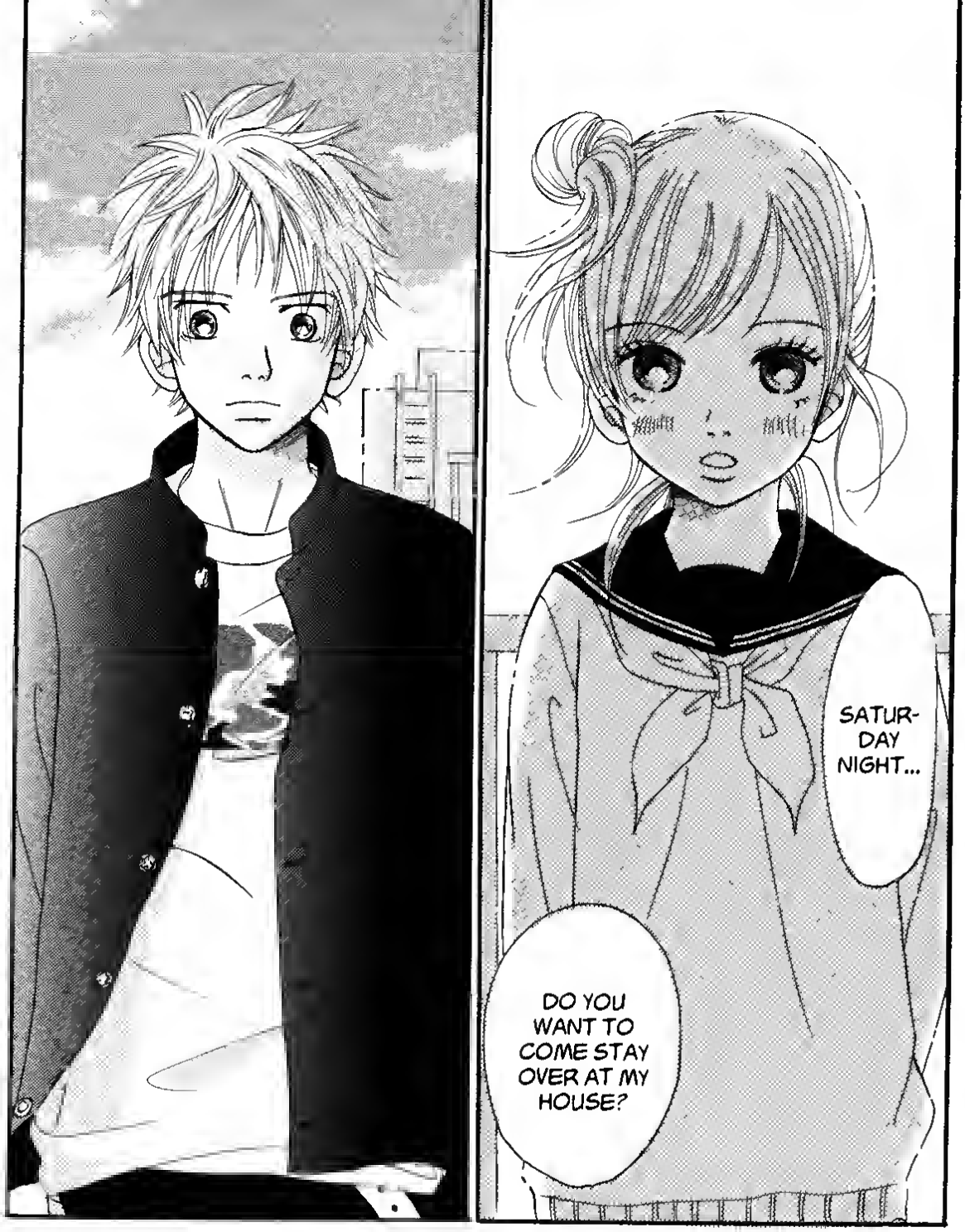
AND ALL THE STARS IN THE NIGHT SKY HAD GATHERED IN HIS EYES.

HIS FACE, SHINING IN THE DARKNESS...

RRRING
RRING
Call Miyata
RRING
HELLO?
OH.
UH-HUH.
I GOT YOUR TEXT.
bip
NO. I'M FINE.
OH NO.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
UH-HUH.
OKAY, I'LL MEET YOU TOMORROW IN FRONT OF THE STATION.
...


...WE BECAME ADULTS.
BUT...
... BEFORE LONG...

SWAP!



Chapter 25

...
S...
SAY SOME-THING.
...
IS THIS A JOKE?
A SET-UP?
MY PARENTS ARE GOING TO BE IN SAPPORO FOR A WEDDING.
...
YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO GO ON A TRIP TOGETHER.
THIS ISN'T A TRIP, BUT... AT LEAST WE CAN BE TOGETHER FOR THE WHOLE DAY...
WE'LL GO SEE A MOVIE DURING THE DAY...
...THEN COME BACK HOME TOGETHER IN THE EVENING.
I'LL MAKE SPAGHETTI CARBONARA FOR DINNER.
I PRACTICED MAKING THE RECIPE LAST WEEK, SO I WON'T MESS UP.

...
shff
AND I'LL TELL HER EVERY-THING IS FINE AS ALWAYS.
MOM WILL CALL ME THAT NIGHT.
I CLEANED THE BATH SO IT'S SPOTLESS.
...FOR THE ROMANTIC WEEKEND I'VE PLANNED.
EVERY-THING IS READY...
...UNTIL THE SUN RISES.
THEN WE'LL STARE OUT AT THE STARRY SKY AND TALK ALL NIGHT...
BUT...
I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.
MAYBE IT'S UN-REALISTIC TO THINK...
...THAT'S ALL THAT WILL HAPPEN BETWEEN A 17-YEAR-OLD BOY AND GIRL.

...
OH?
...CAME TO SHOP ALL THE WAY DOWN HERE.
I NEVER KNEW YOU...
YANO!
JOLT
WHAT DID YOU COME TO BUY?
CONDOMS
I'M NOT LYING, YOU KNOW?
WOOF
I WANT TO HOLD HER...
... TIGHT-LY...
...AND KISS HER...
... THEN HOLD HER AGAIN ...
...UNTIL MORNING.
...WANT TO HOLD NANAMI TIGHTLY...
...THROUGH THE NIGHT.
I JUST...
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH...
I'M OKAY WITH IT IF WE DON'T HAVE SEX.
DRUG STORE
sniff
sniff

I WONDER WHAT TAKAHASHI WEARS TO BED?
...
Pajamas maybe.
I hope she wears the kind that show her shoulders...
I HOPE...
... TOMOR-ROW COMES QUICKLY.

BUS
Is he skipping down the street?
HEE...
SLAM
...
NOT AGAIN...
BUS
YOU GOING TO THE STATION?
YOU HAVE A DATE?
...
YEAH.
YOU TOO?
YEAH.
YOU WENT ALL THE WAY TO THE NEXT TOWN AND WERE SEEN ANYWAY.
HEH
FOOL.
NEWS TRAVELS FAST...
THERE WAS A REPORT OF YOU BEING SIGHTED AT A CERTAIN STORE LAST NIGHT...
WELL, DO YOUR BEST.
YOU TOO.
HUH?

YEAH.
IT'S NOT LIKE HIM TO BE SO SUBMIS-SIVE...
rring
JUST DON'T HURT HER, OKAY?
?
ANSWER IT...
ring
ring
ring
ring
?
HUH?
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
I WAS ABOUT TO GET ON THE BUS.
...
YES...?
...
Yuri Yamamoto

THE BUS IS HERE.
LOOK, I'M GOING TO HANG UP IF YOU JUST CALLED FOR NO REASON ...
fwssh
MOTO?
WHERE ARE YOU RIGHT NOW?
HEY.
AREN'T YOU GET-TING ON?
WHOA.
VRRROOOO

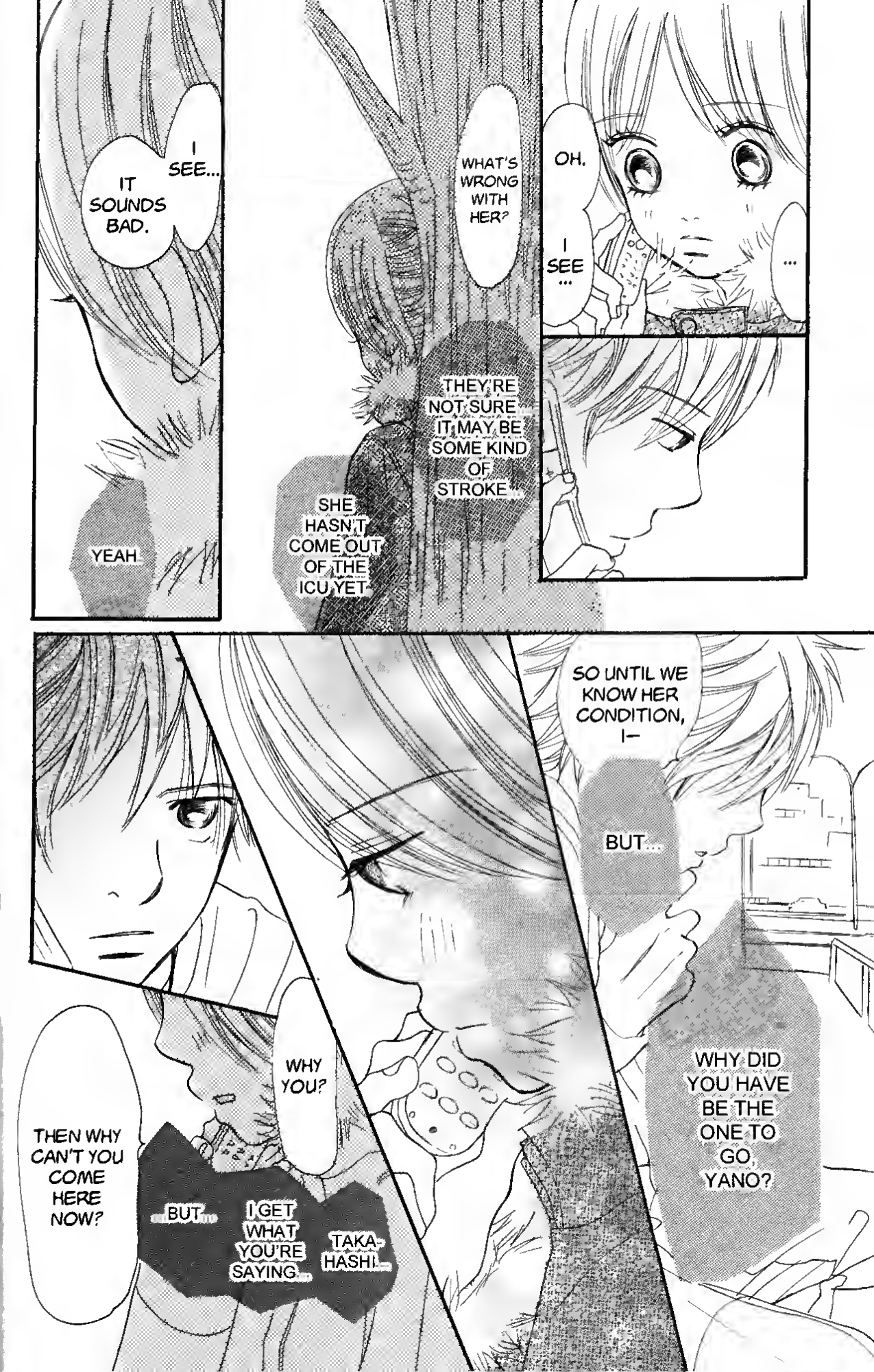
DON'T FORGET TO LOCK THE DOOR.
Don't forget to take the key if you go out.
I'LL CALL YOU TO-NIGHT.
HAVE FUN.
UH-HUH.
...
OKAY.
I NEED TO LEAVE NOW TOO.
THIS WILL BE...
SORRY, MOM.
...A VERY SPECIAL DAY.

"I SHOOK HER BUT SHE WON'T OPEN HER EYES."
CALL AN AMBU-LANCE.
"IT'S MY MOM."
"SHE WON'T WAKE UP..."

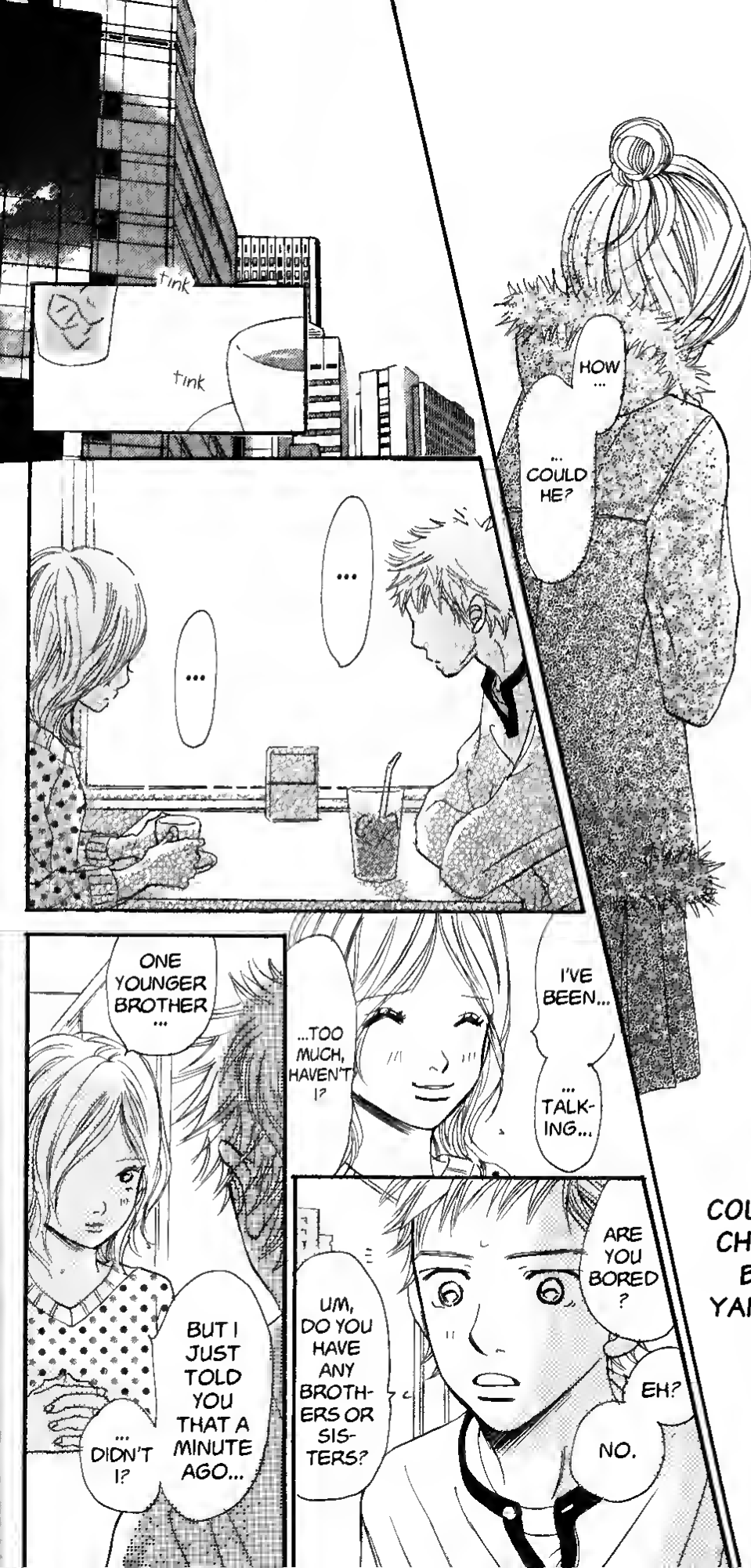
EVERY-
THING IS
GOING TO
BE ALL
RIGHT.
SHE'S
...
...IN
THE ICU
RIGHT
NOW.
IT'S
ALL
RIGHT...

HE'S LATE.
YANO IS USUALLY ALWAYS ON TIME...
OH.
SORRY.
DO YOU MIND IF I GO MAKE A PHONE CALL?
SURE.
HA HA HA
DID YOU...
...HAVE PLANS FOR TODAY?
AH...
YEAH ...
KIND OF...
I'LL BE BACK.

YANO?!
YOU'RE HALF AN HOUR LATE.
WHAT'S WRONG ?!
SORRY.
I KEPT GETTING YOUR VOICE MAIL.
I RAN INTO SOME TROUBLE ON THE WAY OUT...
HUH?
YAMA-MOTO'S MOTHER FELL ILL...
UM, IT'S PROBABLY GOING TO TAKE SOME MORE TIME, SO WOULD YOU GO HOME FOR NOW?
WHAT ?!
I'M WITH HER AT THE HOSPITAL RIGHT NOW.
BUT... THE MOVIE ?
SORRY.
I DON'T KNOW.
YOU DON'T KNOW...
WHAT TIME ARE YOU GOING TO BE ABLE TO COME TO MY HOUSE?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING RIGHT NOW?

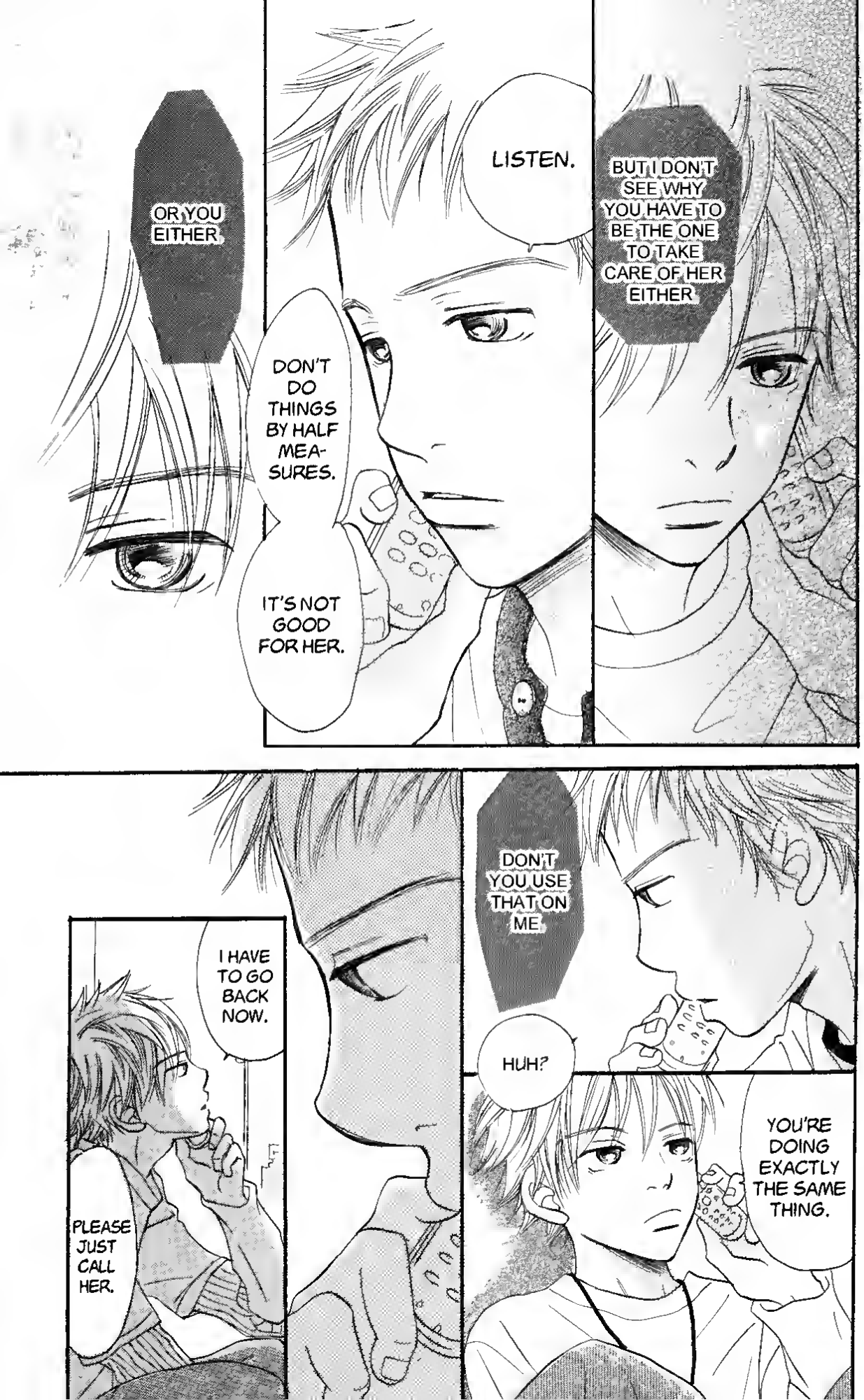

I SEE...
IT SOUNDS BAD.
YEAH.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER?
SHE HASN'T COME OUT OF THE ICU YET.
THEY'RE NOT SURE... IT MAY BE SOME KIND OF STROKE...
OH.
I SEE...
...
SO UNTIL WE KNOW HER CONDITION, I—
BUT...
WHY DID YOU HAVE BE THE ONE TO GO, YANO?
WHY YOU?
THEN WHY CAN'T YOU COME HERE NOW?
...BUT...
I GET WHAT YOU'RE SAYING...
TAKA-HASHI...

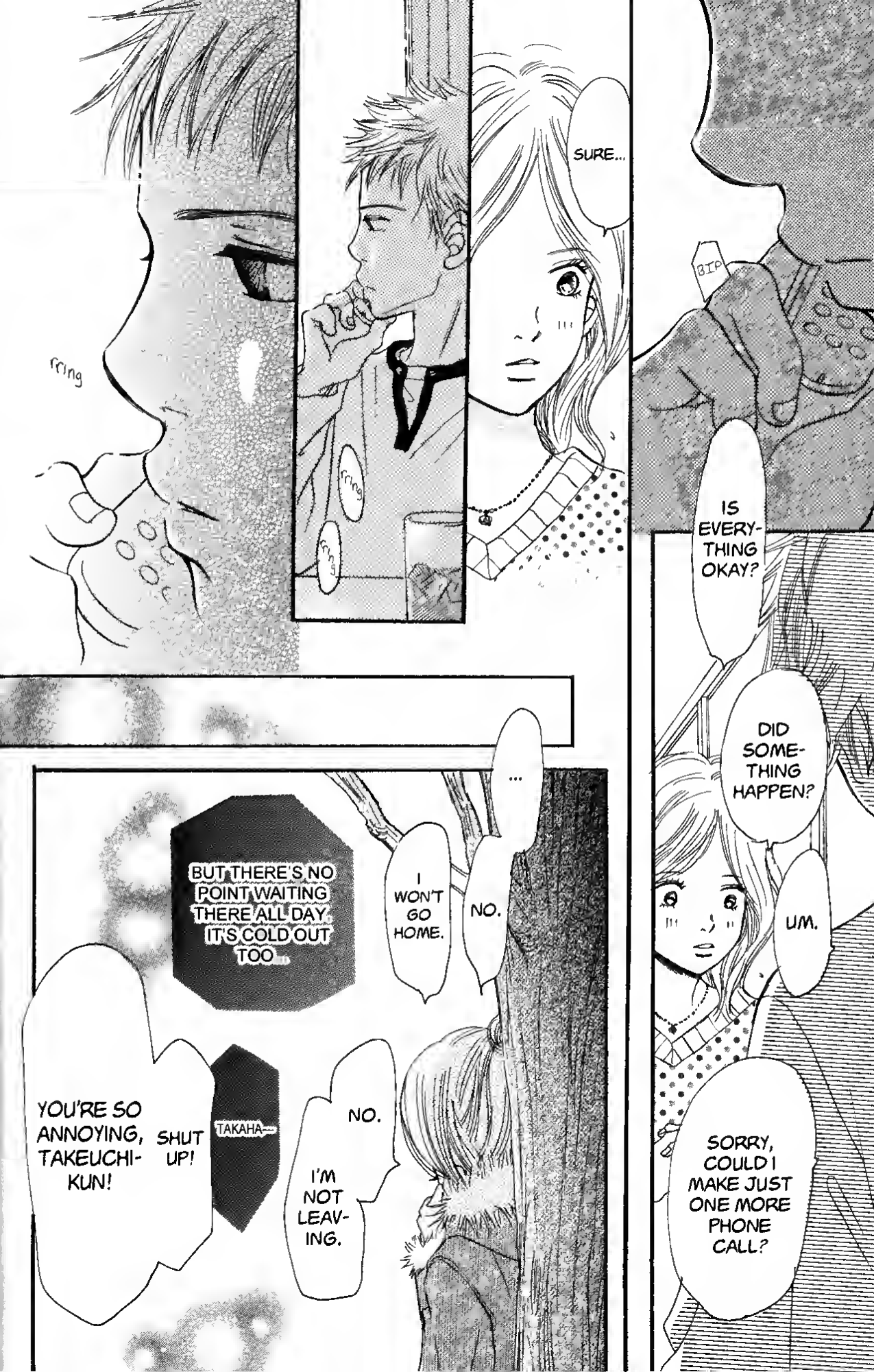
I CAN'T LEAVE HER ON HER OWN, CAN I?
CAN'T LEAVE HER ON HER OWN?
PLEASE, TAKAHASHI.
GO BACK HOME AND WAIT FOR ME.
WHY?
TAKAHA...
I'M NOT LEAVING!
WHY?!
YOU COME HERE RIGHT NOW.
I'M NOT GOING HOME UNTIL YOU COME HERE, YANO.

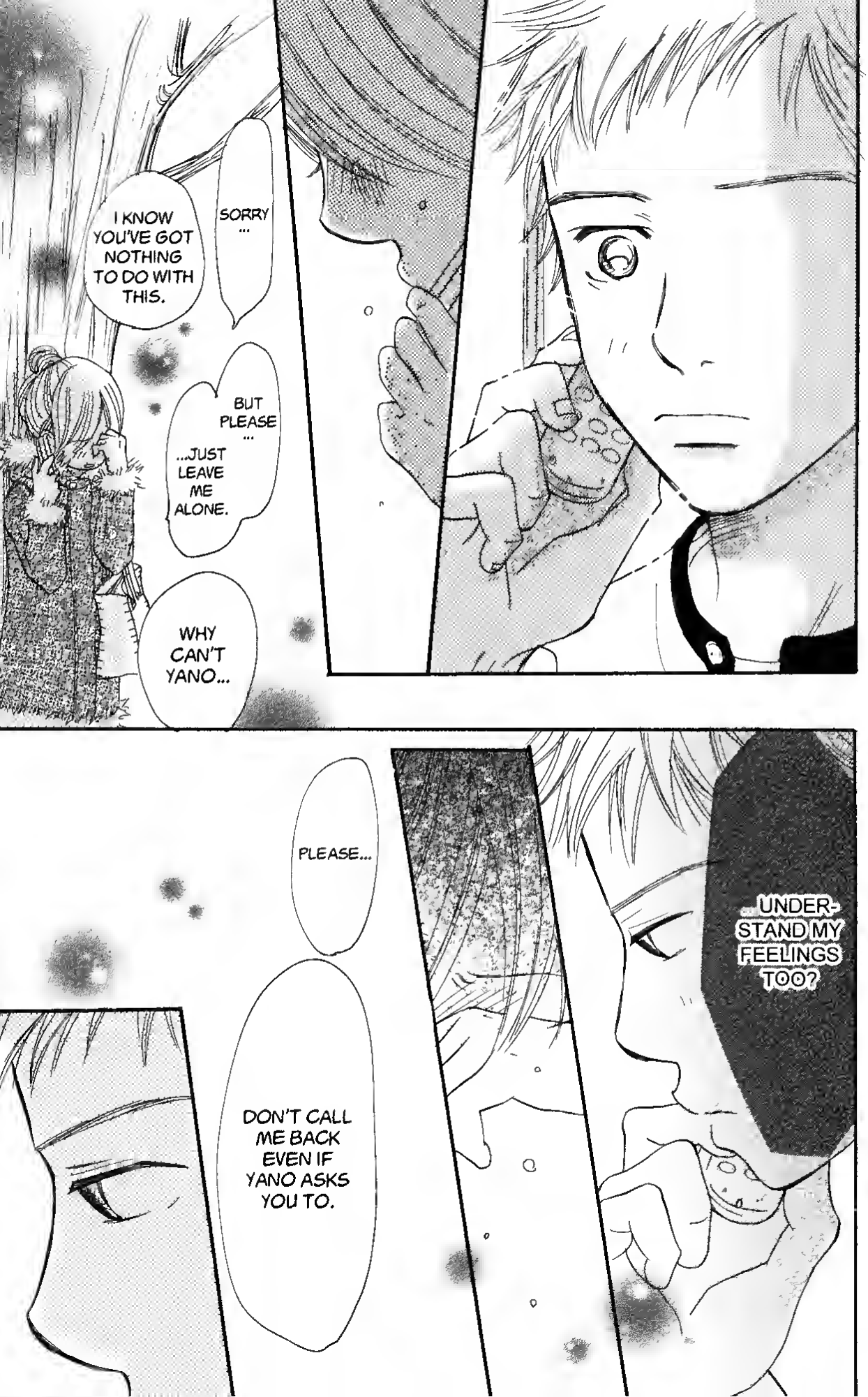

tink
tink
...
HOW ...
... COULD HE?
ON TODAY OF ALL DAYS...
...
...
I'VE BEEN...
... TALK-ING...
...TOO MUCH, HAVEN'T I?
ARE YOU BORED?
UM, DO YOU HAVE ANY BROTH-ERS OR SIS-TERS?
EH?
NO.
...HOW COULD YANO CHOOSE TO BE WITH YAMAMOTO-SAN?
ONE YOUNGER BROTHER ...
BUT I JUST TOLD YOU THAT A MINUTE AGO...
... DIDN'T I?

KOFF
SORRY.
rring
UM.
rring
DO YOU MIND?
SAVED!
WHAT?
HELLO?
HUH?
WHAT THE HELL...
...DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
SHE COMPLETELY SNAPPED AND WON'T ANSWER MY CALLS...
BUT I'VE GOT TO GO BACK INSIDE SOON.
I KNOW I'M ASKING FOR TOO MUCH, BUT COULD YOU CALL HER AND PERSUADE HER?
She'll probably answer your call

DON'T BE A MORON!
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS JUST LEAVE AND GO MEET TAKAHASHI, RIGHT?!
DON'T YOU EVEN UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE DOING?
SHE'S ALL ALONE.
SHE DOESN'T HAVE A FATHER...
WELL...
SHE DOES, BUT HE'S SHACKING UP WITH SOME WOMAN SOMEWHERE AND HARDLY EVER COMES HOME
HER RELATIVES LIVE FAR AWAY...
AND SHE'S GOT NO ONE
THE ONLY FAMILY SHE HAS RIGHT NOW IS HER MOTHER
I KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE...
...WHEN THERE'S NO ONE THERE FOR YOU.


LISTEN.
BUT I DON'T SEE WHY YOU HAVE TO BE THE ONE TO TAKE CARE OF HER EITHER.
OR YOU EITHER.
DON'T DO THINGS BY HALF MEA-SURES.
IT'S NOT GOOD FOR HER.
DON'T YOU USE THAT ON ME.
HUH?
YOU'RE DOING EXACTLY THE SAME THING.
I HAVE TO GO BACK NOW.
PLEASE JUST CALL HER.

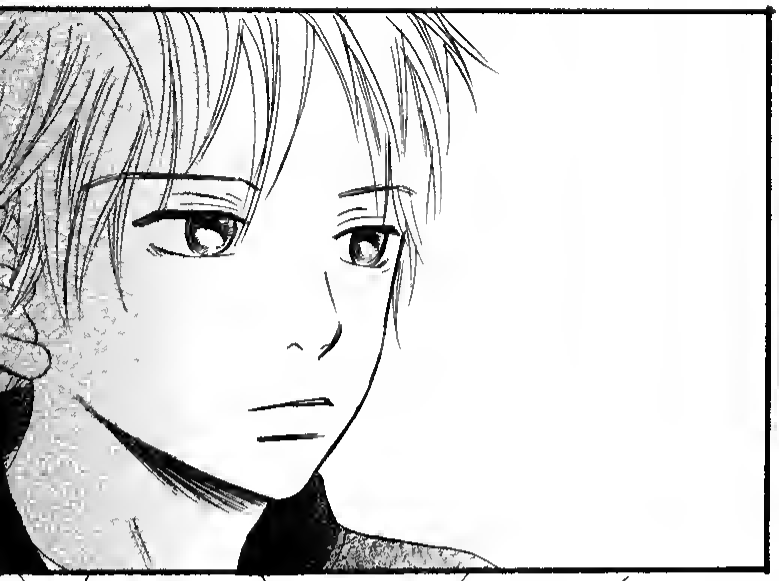

rring
SURE...
BIP
IS EVERY-THING OKAY?
DID SOME-THING HAPPEN?
UM.
SORRY, COULD I MAKE JUST ONE MORE PHONE CALL?
...
NO.
I WON'T GO HOME.
BUT THERE'S NO POINT WAITING THERE ALL DAY. IT'S COLD OUT TOO...
NO.
I'M NOT LEAV-ING.
TAKAHA—
SHUT UP!
YOU'RE SO ANNOYING, TAKEUCHI-KUN!

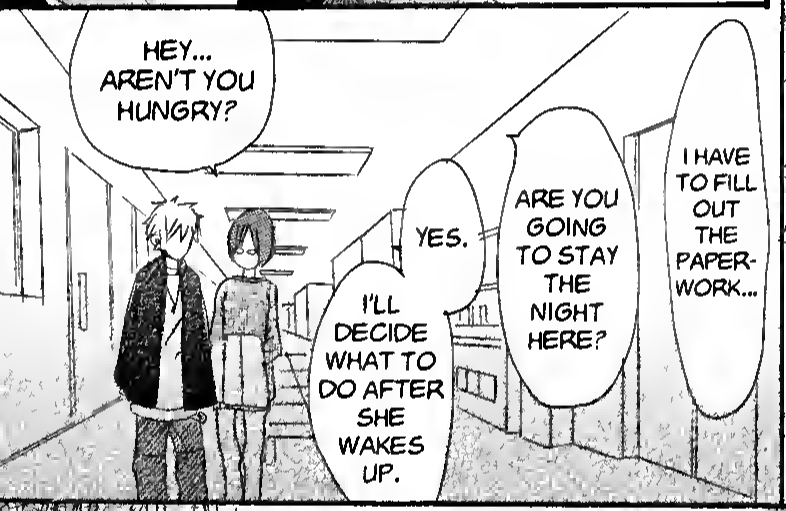

I KNOW YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS.
SORRY ...
BUT PLEASE ...
...JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.
WHY CAN'T YANO...
PLEASE...
DON'T CALL ME BACK EVEN IF YANO ASKS YOU TO.
...UNDER-STAND MY FEELINGS TOO?

I KNOW I'M BEING STUBBORN AND WHAT I'M DOING IS MEANING-LESS...
AND I ALSO REALIZE I MIGHT NOT HAVE ACTED THIS WAY...
...BUT I JUST CAN'T BE MAGNAN-IMOUS ABOUT THIS.
...IF IT DIDN'T INVOLVE YAMAMOTO-SAN.
I GET IT...
BUT...

BUT FOR THIS ONE DAY...
I WANTED HIM TO COME NO MATTER WHAT.
YANO, I FEEL THE SAME WAY...
I DON'T WANT TO BE ALONE AT A TIME LIKE THIS EITHER.
... STARING OUT THE WINDOW SINCE THAT PHONE CALL.
TAKEUCHI-KUN, YOU'VE BEEN...
OH.
ARE YOU LISTEN-ING?
AND ...

IT'S PROBABLY DUE TO STRESS AND FATIGUE...
SHE SHOULD WAKE UP SOON.
I FOUND NOTHING WRONG WITH HER BRAIN OR ANY OTHER PART OF HER BODY.
I'VE GIVEN HER SOME MEDICINE AND HER BLOOD PRES-SURE IS BACK TO NORMAL.
IT WAS GOOD YOU FOUND HER SO QUICKLY.
KLAK
WILL THE FAMILY MEMBERS PLEASE COME IN?

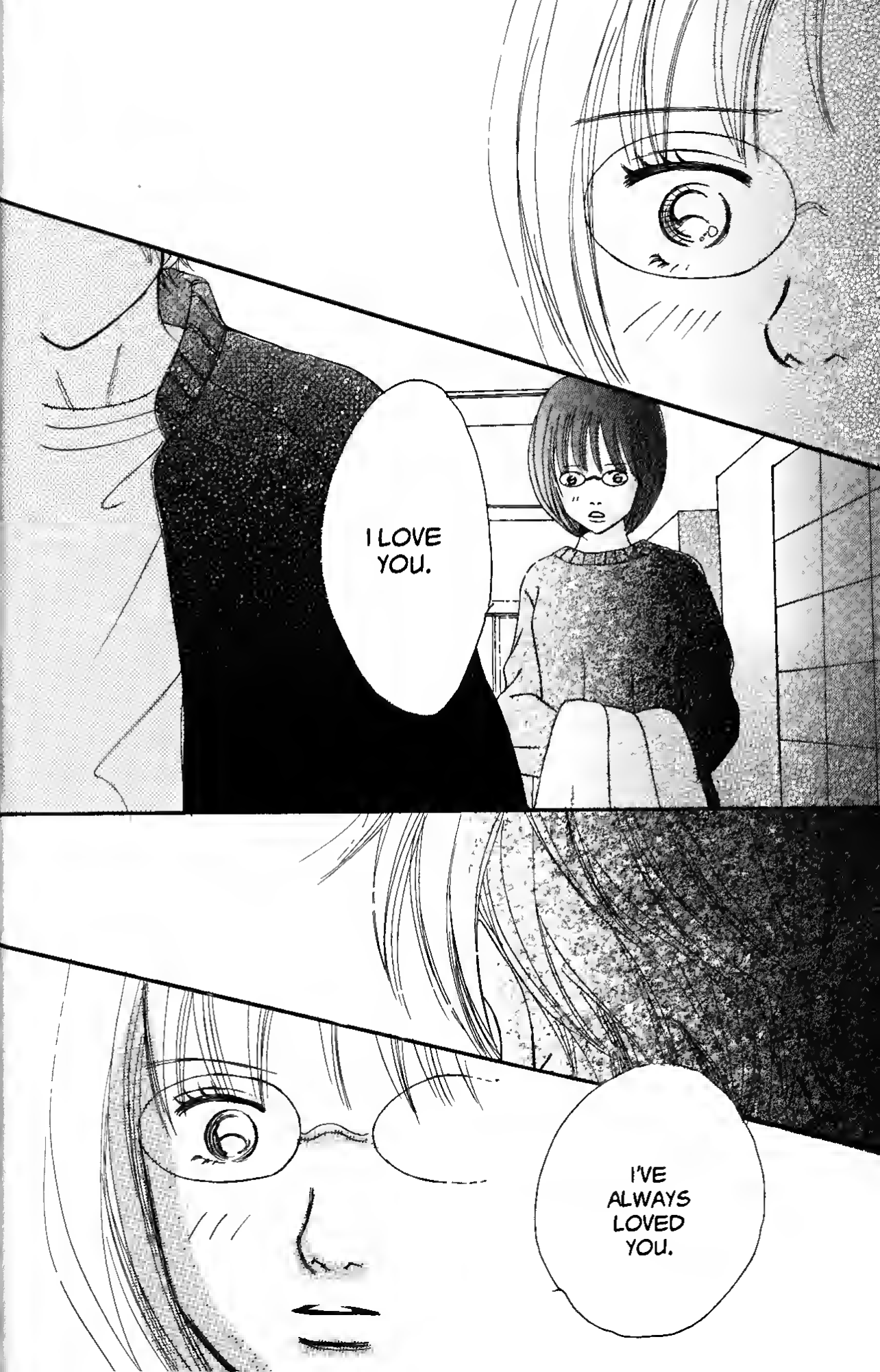



HEY... AREN'T YOU HUNGRY?
I'LL DECIDE WHAT TO DO AFTER SHE WAKES UP.
YES.
ARE YOU GOING TO STAY THE NIGHT HERE?
I HAVE TO FILL OUT THE PAPER-WORK...

...MIND IF I LEFT FOR TODAY?
THERE'S SOMEPLACE I'VE GOT TO BE.
YOU DIDN'T EAT LUNCH, DID YOU?
WOULD YOU...
DO YOU WANT TO GET SOMETHING TO EAT? I'LL BUY YOU SOMETHING AT THE CAFE-TERIA.

AH...
OF COURSE.
I'M SORRY ABOUT THIS.
I'M SORRY.
I WANT TO STAY WITH YOU UNTIL YOUR MOTHER WAKES UP, BUT...
IT WAS YOUR WEEK-END TOO...
BUT FEEL FREE TO CALL ME IF ANY-THING HAPPENS.
THERE'S NOTHING I CAN REALLY DO...
...BUT I'M HERE FOR SUPPORT.
BYE.
OH!
UM...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TODAY.
SURE.
SAY HI TO YOUR MOM FOR ME.
I'LL WALK YOU OUT.
I KNOW THE WAY.
THE CAFETERIA WILL CLOSE IF YOU DON'T HURRY.

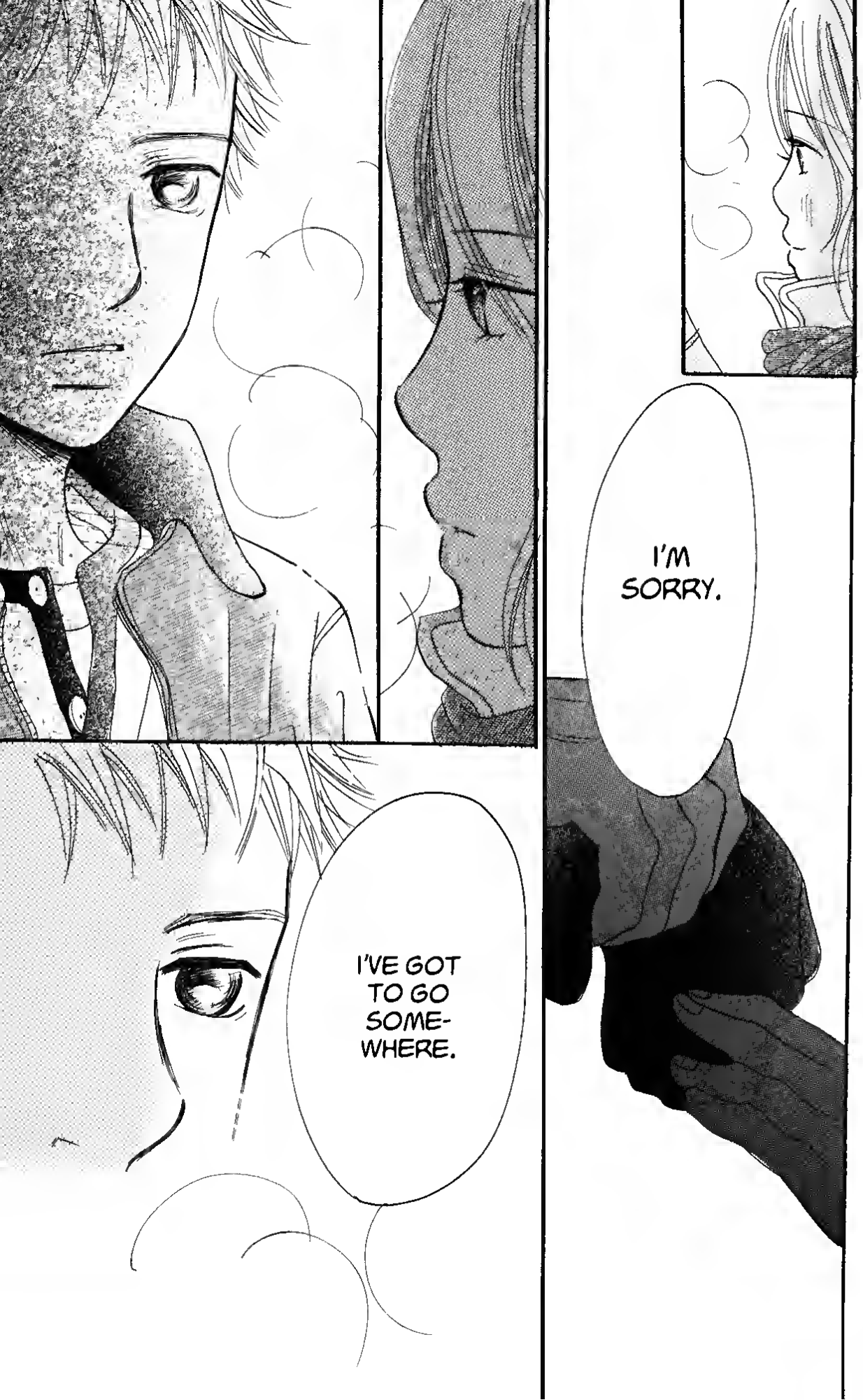
I'LL PAY...
UH... THE TAXI FARE...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.


I LOVE YOU.
I'VE ALWAYS LOVED YOU.

YANO!
I'VE ALWAYS LOVED YOU.

I'M SORRY, BUT COULD YOU PLEASE HURRY?
STATION PLAZA.
CLICK

IT'S THE FIRST SNOW OF THE SEASON.
NO WONDER IT WAS SO COLD TODAY.
Ahh! It's freezing!
I SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT GLOVES WITH ME.
I can see my breath.
HUH?
MY GLOVES ...
HERE.
WEAR THEM.
Y...
YOU'RE GIVING THEM TO ME?


I'M SORRY.
I'VE GOT TO GO SOME-WHERE.

...
WHERE?
BUT...
SHE'S YOUR FRIEND'S GIRL-FRIEND, ISN'T SHE?
I DON'T MIND IF YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT.
THINGS LIKE THIS TAKE A LOT OF TIME TO GET OVER.
IT'S ALL RIGHT IF YOU HATE ME FOR BEING A TOTAL ASSHOLE.
HE...
...WAS RIGHT.

I'M SORRY.
I CAN'T CHANGE...

...HOW I FEEL.
DAMN IT.
blink
Red light
THERE'S A TRAFFIC JAM AT THE ENTRANCE.
THEN ...
CAN YOU CAN DROP ME OFF AT THE TRAFFIC LIGHT OVER THERE?
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
DASH

HE LOVES YOU...
...AND YOU LOVE HIM.

MUTUAL LOVE?
SHE'S CRYING.
YOU'RE TO-GETHER.
I'M THE ODD ONE OUT.
STOLEN LOVE?
SORRY. LET ME THROUGH.
I'VE GIVEN UP SO MANY TIMES.
FRIENDSHIP?
RIGHT NOW SHE'S CRYING.
I THOUGHT GIVING UP WAS BEST FOR TAKAHASHI.
BUT...

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THOSE THINGS...
...ANY-MORE.
TO HELL WITH IT!

HUFF
...
"
shff

EVEN THOUGH I TOLD YOU TO WAIT AT HOME...
WHY ARE YOU BEING SO BULLHEADED?
...
I DON'T CARE.
HOW LONG DO YOU PLAN TO STAY HERE?
YOU'LL CATCH COLD.

LET'S GO HOME.

YOU'RE TOGETHER.
BUT...
I CAN PROMISE YOU ONE THING HE CAN'T.
...AND HE LOVES YOU.
YOU LOVE HIM...

...YOU CRY.
LET'S GO HOME.
I WILL NEVER MAKE...
HUFF
HUFF

I'm not giving you this!
Forgive me!

YEAH...
THANKS ...
...FOR COMING WITH ME.
NO PROB-LEM.
WARM YOURSELF UP AND GO TO BED EARLY.
TAKA-HASHI!
YUNK

Chapter 26

I'M SO SORRY...
...I BROKE OUR DATE...
LEAVE.
I...
...JUST WENT TO THE STATION BUT YOU'D LEFT.

YOU SHOULD GET INSIDE ...
KA-CHAK

IT DIDN'T OCCUR TO YOU THAT SHE WOULD CRY, DID IT?
IT WASN'T A BIG DEAL TO YOU.
AND IT'S NOT LIKE YOU REALLY CARE ABOUT YAMAMOTO.
THAT'S WHY YOU WERE ABLE TO DO IT.
YOU THINK THERE'S NO REASON TO FEEL GUILTY.
BUT THAT'S NOT HOW TAKAHASHI SEES IT.
HOW CAN YOU EXPLAIN IT...
...TO TAKAHASHI, WHO ALREADY FEELS INSECURE ABOUT THE SITUATION?
YOUR VIEW OF THINGS AND TAKAHASHI'S VIEW OF THINGS AREN'T THE SAME, YOU KNOW.

I'M NOT GOING TO CRITICIZE YOU FOR HELPING YAMAMOTO.
BUT...
...WHAT IS IMPORTANT HERE ISN'T WHAT'S RIGHT OR WRONG.
THE IMPORTANT THING...
...IS NOT TO HURT HER, YOU KNOW?

DING DONG
DING DONG

IT DIDN'T OCCUR TO YOU THAT SHE WOULD CRY, DID IT?
IT WASN'T A BIG DEAL TO YOU.
BUT THAT'S NOT HOW TAKA-HASHI SEES IT.
YOU HURT HER.

DRIVING SCHOOL
TEL
DAMN IT!
TOK
Hi!
klak
koff
WHAT?
YOU GOT A COLD?
Your face is red.
IT TOOK ME TWO HOURS TO WALK HOME LAST NIGHT...
HUH?
YOU WALKED IN THE SNOW?
I DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH FOR THE BUS.
I took too many taxis.
HA HA
GO HOME.
You're going to collapse.
koff
koff

CONGRATS!
♡
...
Hey.
EH...
AHH!
SO NANA HAS...
UH-HUH.
WE WORRIED ABOUT YOU LIKE PARENTS!
SO?
TELL US.
HOW'D IT GO?
UM.
I...
KLAK

TAKA-
HASHI.
OH.
I HAVE TO GO AND GET THE DAILY LOG.
I'M SORRY.
DASH
TAKA-
HASHI.
REEL
WAIT!
THNK
SLAP
LET GO OF ME!

TAKA-
HASHI.
YANO COL-
LAPSED?
UM.
YES ...
HE WENT HOME.
SERI-
OUSLY?
HIS FEVER IS THAT BAD?
HE'S FINE!
IT'S JUST A COLD.
BYE.
TAKAHASHI.

ARE YOU AVOIDING ME NOW?
OF COURSE NOT.
WHAT A JERK.
NANA, YOU'RE BEING SELFISH.
HUH?
HE STOOD YOU UP AND WENT OVER TO SEE YAMAMOTO-SAN?
WHAT?
HE CHOSE ANOTHER GIRL OVER HER, YOU KNOW?
DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S CRUEL?
BUT HE TOLD HER EVERY-THING THAT HAPPENED.
EMERGEN-CIES HAPPEN. NANA SHOULD BE MORE UNDER-STANDING.

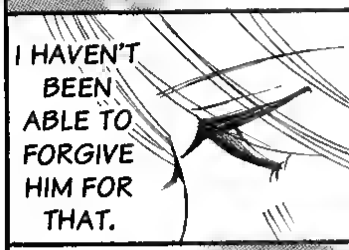
HOW IS SHE SUPPOSED TO TRUST HIM WHEN HE KEEPS DOING THESE KINDS OF THINGS...
TRUST ?!
BUT THAT'S NOT HIS PROBLEM, IT'S HERS, RIGHT?
BECAUSE SHE'S HIS GIRL-FRIEND.
TAKA
I DON'T SEE WHY HE HAS TO SPARE NANA'S FEELINGS ALL THE TIME.
IF SHE TRUSTS HIM, SHE SHOULDN'T GET UPSET ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
HMM... YOU THINK SO?
MIZU
BUT WHY DOES NANA HAVE TO BE THE ONE WHO LOSES OUT?
TRUST?
You wouldn't call him anyway, would you?
I BET YANO WOULDN'T COME TO ME IF MY MOM FELL ILL.
I just had a sad thought.
...
BUT ...
Mizu-chin.
I'D COME.
I FEEL SO LONELY ...
Sob Sob
I...I'd come too, I think.
YANO WENT BECAUSE HE DIDN'T THINK THERE WAS ANYTHING WRONG IN GOING, RIGHT?
HE TRUSTS NANA.
AM I WRONG ?
MY PROB-LEM...
I KEEP HAVING THE SAME PROBLEM...
IT'S WHAT I ALWAYS SEEM TO LACK.
TRUST.

BUT PLEASE STOP...
...MAKING ME SO UNEASY.

HOW DO YOU FEEL?
YOUR FEVER HAS GONE DOWN...
YOU'VE SLEPT THE WHOLE DAY, YOU KNOW.

YOU HAVE A GUEST.
SHE CAME TO SEE HOW YOU WERE DOING. SHOULD I LET HER IN?
A GUEST?
OH.
STAY IN BED.

YAMA-MOTO AND I HAD SEX.
MAYBE, DEEP DOWN INSIDE...


I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FORGIVE HIM FOR THAT.

MAYBE...

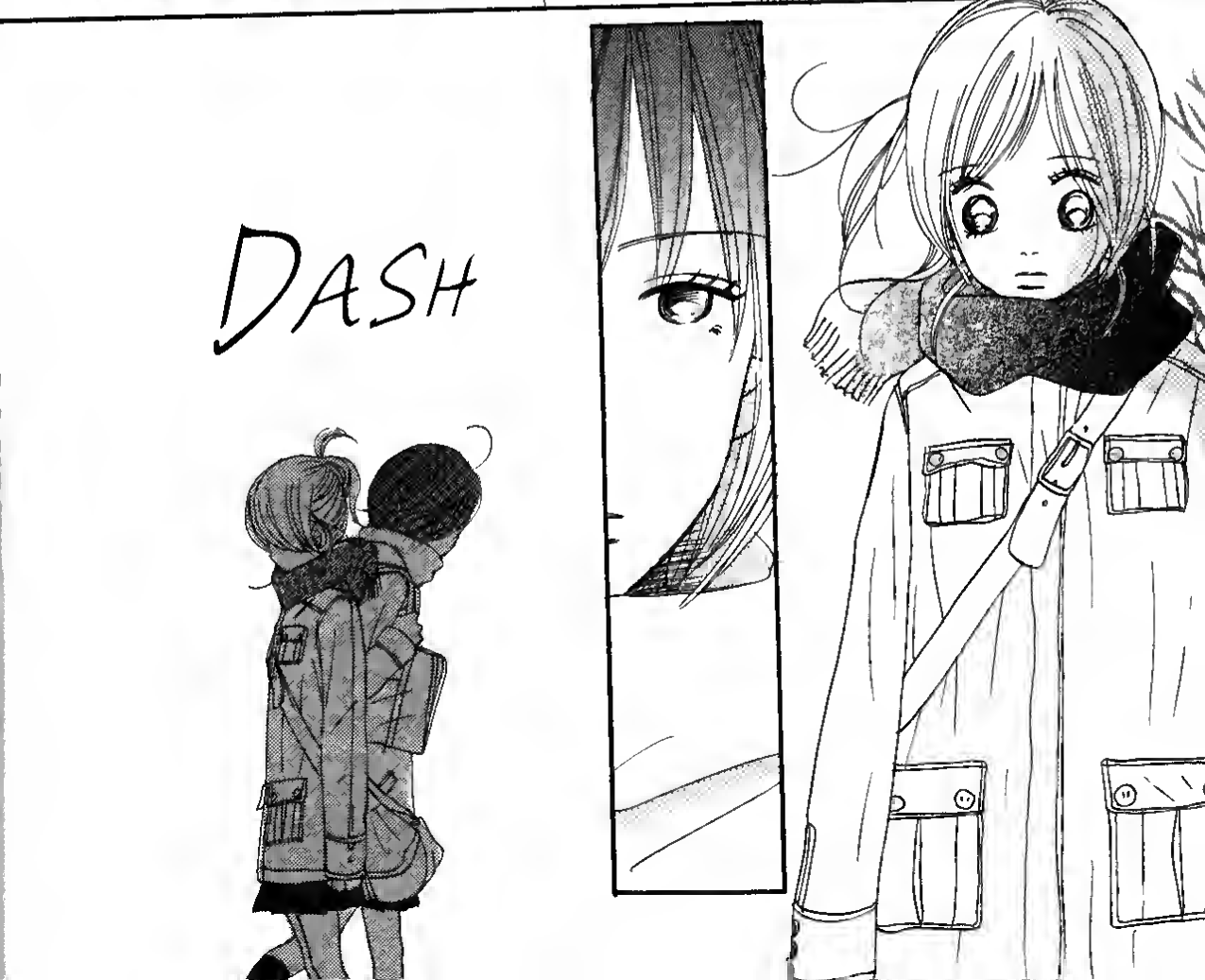
IT REALLY IS MY PROBLEM...

I HEARD YOU ALMOST CAUGHT PNEUMONIA.
HOW...
...ARE YOU FEEL-ING?
I'M FINE NOW.
NAH...
I GOT WORRIED AFTER YOU'D BEEN ABSENT FOR OVER TWO DAYS.
OH.
DMP
I MADE A COPY FOR YOU.
MY NOTES.

IT'S OKAY.
I CAN GET THE NOTES OFF OTHER PEOPLE.
I BROUGHT UP SOME MELON.
SHE BROUGHT IT AS A GIFT.
DON'T FORGET TO THANK HER, MOTO-HARU.
OH.
THANK YOU.
I'VE ALWAYS...
...LOVED YOU.
YOUR MOTHER ...
...IS REALLY BEAU-TIFUL.
YOU MIGHT CATCH MY COLD.
YOU SHOULD GO HOME ONCE YOU'VE FINISHED EATING THAT.

LEAVE.
tink
I HARDLY EVER CATCH A COLD SO—
SHUP
tmp
tmp
tmp
KA-CHAK
tink

I'M HERE.
I DON'T REALLY WANT TO SEE HIM YET, BUT...
HE'S BEEN OUT FOR TWO DAYS NOW.
I'LL TAKE A QUICK PEEK IN...
...AND LEAVE QUICKLY.
CHAK


DASH

YAMAMOTO-SAN!
WHY?
I KNOW I'M BEING SELFISH...
...TO EVEN ASK YOU THIS, BUT...
...WOULD YOU STOP CALLING YANO...
...AND TRYING TO SEE HIM?

WHY?
YANO...
...IS MY BOY-FRIEND, SO...
THEN WHY AREN'T YOU TALKING TO HIM ABOUT IT?
BECAUSE YOU'RE NANA-SAN'S LITTLE SISTER.
IT'S DIFFERENT WITH YOU, SO...
SO...
...HIS JUDGMENT IS IMPAIRED...
I'VE NEVER THOUGHT OF HIM AS MY OLDER SISTER'S BOYFRIEND.

WHAT ...
...DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HIM ANYWAY?
YOU'VE ONLY BEEN WITH HIM FOR A YEAR.
I UNDER-STAND HIM...
BUT I...
I KNOW WHAT YANO WAS LIKE BEFORE HE STARTED GOING OUT WITH MY SISTER...
AND WHAT HE WAS LIKE AFTER SHE DIED.
HOW HE HELD THE TEARS BACK AND LOOKED AS IF HE WANTED TO DIE...
I KNOW EVERY-THING ABOUT HIM.
...A WHOLE LOT BETTER THAN YOU.

OH
DASH
A WHOLE LOT BETTER THAN...
...YOU.
BUT...
I CAN'T HELP THAT, CAN I?
THERE ARE THINGS I DON'T KNOW...
...AND I CAN'T DO ANY-THING ABOUT IT.
OR DO YOU THINK...
...THIS IS MY FAULT?
TAKA-HASHI...
AM I NOT TRYING HARD ENOUGH?
SHE SAYS SHE KNOWS WHAT YANO WAS LIKE AT HIS LOWEST POINT...
AND I'VE BEEN TRYING SO HARD TO UNDER-STAND HIM.
I'VE REALLY TRIED SO HARD...
BUT SHE SAID IT WASN'T ENOUGH...
TAKAHASHI!

THERE'S A LIMIT TO WHAT YOU CAN DO.
IT'S IMPORTANT TO WORK HARD AT IT.
BUT...
NO ONE CAN EVER TRULY UNDERSTAND SOMEONE ELSE.

YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND...
...EXACTLY WHAT HE WANTS YOU TO UNDERSTAND.
JUST LIKE HOW HE CAN'T DO...
...EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT HIM TO DO, TAKAHASHI...
IT'S JUST THE WAY THINGS ARE.
PEOPLE THINK DIFFERENTLY.

THEN...
...WHAT CAN I DO?
TAKE.

I THOUGHT I HEARD A VOICE. WEREN'T YOU TALKING TO SOMEBODY?
OH?
YOU'RE ALONE?
HMM.
...
I...
I WAS ON THE PHONE.
YOU DON'T NEED TO COME UP.
YOU MIGHT CATCH MY COLD, SO GO HOME.

...
IT'S COLD OUT HERE...
CLOSE YOUR WINDOW.
YEAH.
klat
TAKE ...
I...
...
...DON'T GET IT AT ALL.
GET...
...WHAT?
HOW TO GO OUT WITH TAKAHASHI WITHOUT HURTING HER.

MAYBE I LACK SOMETHING VITAL AS A HUMAN BEING?
THAT WOULDN'T BE A SURPRISE, WOULD IT?
HA HA.
IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE FELT THIS WAY.
HUH?
I'M NOT CONFIDENT.

I'M COMPLETELY ...
...PITIFUL, AREN'T I?
FOOMP
...FOR MAKING HER CRY.
I CAN'T ...
...FORGIVE MYSELF ...
AND...
I CAN'T BE SURE I WON'T HURT HER AGAIN.
BUT...

TAKAHASHI ...
...IS THE ONE PERSON...
...I ABSO-LUTELY WON'T GIVE UP.
!
TAKA-HASHI!

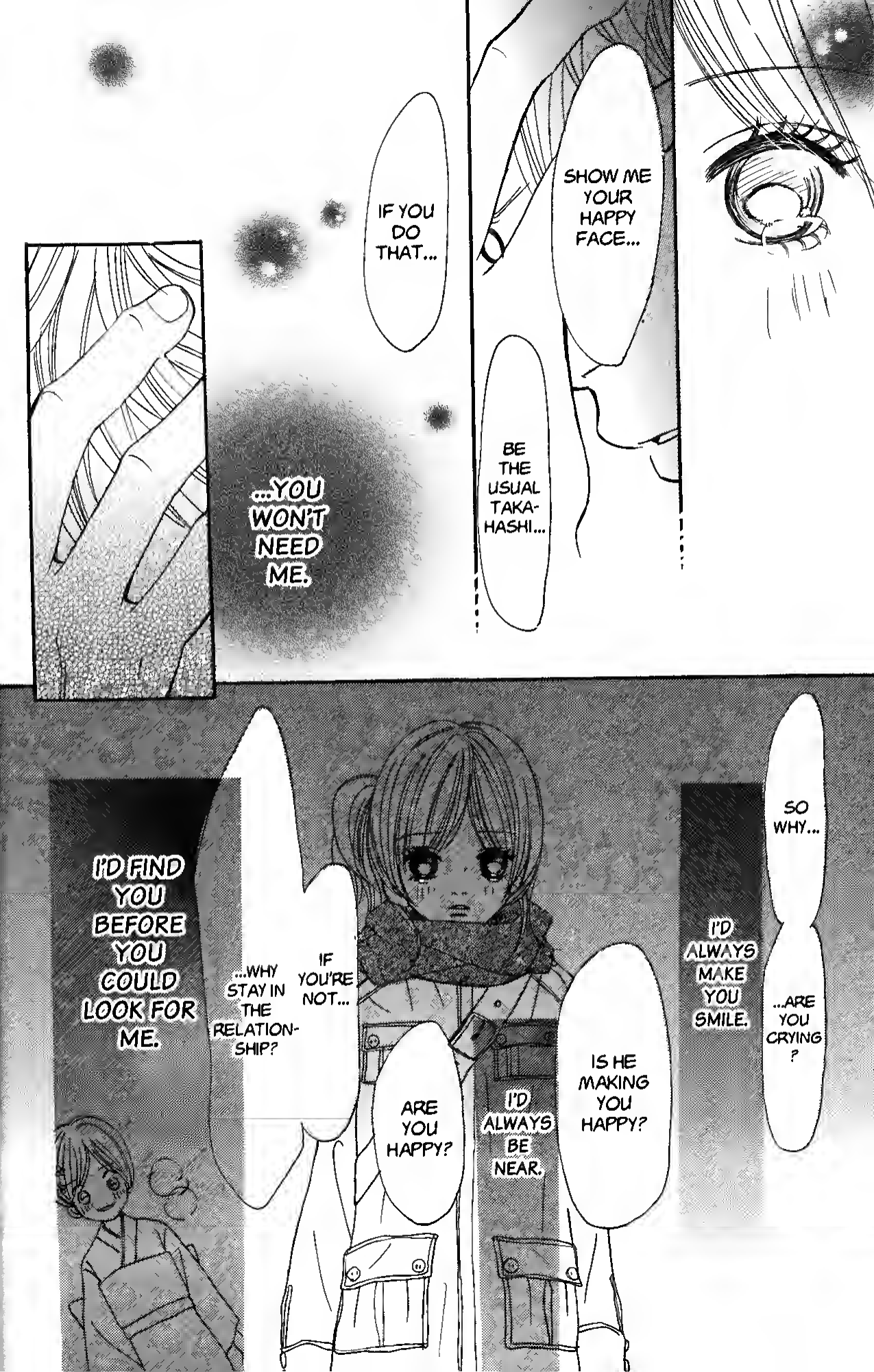
tmp
WHAT'S WRONG?
YOU SHOULD BE IN BED.
HEY...
ARE YOU SURE...
...NO ONE ELSE CAME?
I DON'T THINK SO.
?
SLAM
MOTO-HARU?
DON'T GO OUTS!—

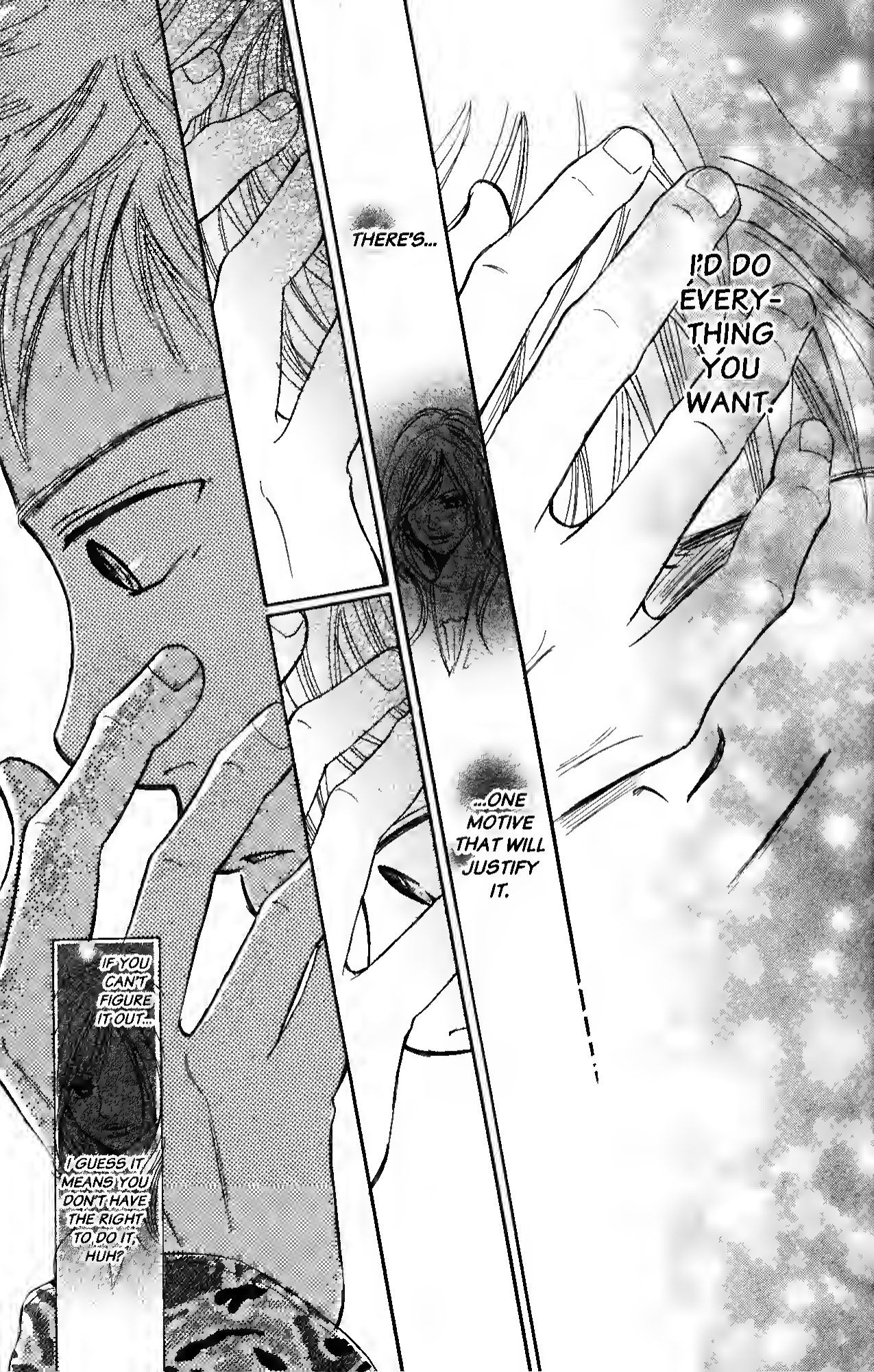
KREE
MOTOHARU!
LET ME GO!
THERE'S NO ONE HERE.
MOTO-HARU.
LOOK.
DO YOU SEE ANYONE?

HUFF
YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL AFTER BEING SO ILL.

TAKA-
HASHI.
WAIT...
DASH
STOP BEING NICE TO ME WHEN I'M FEELING VULNERABLE!

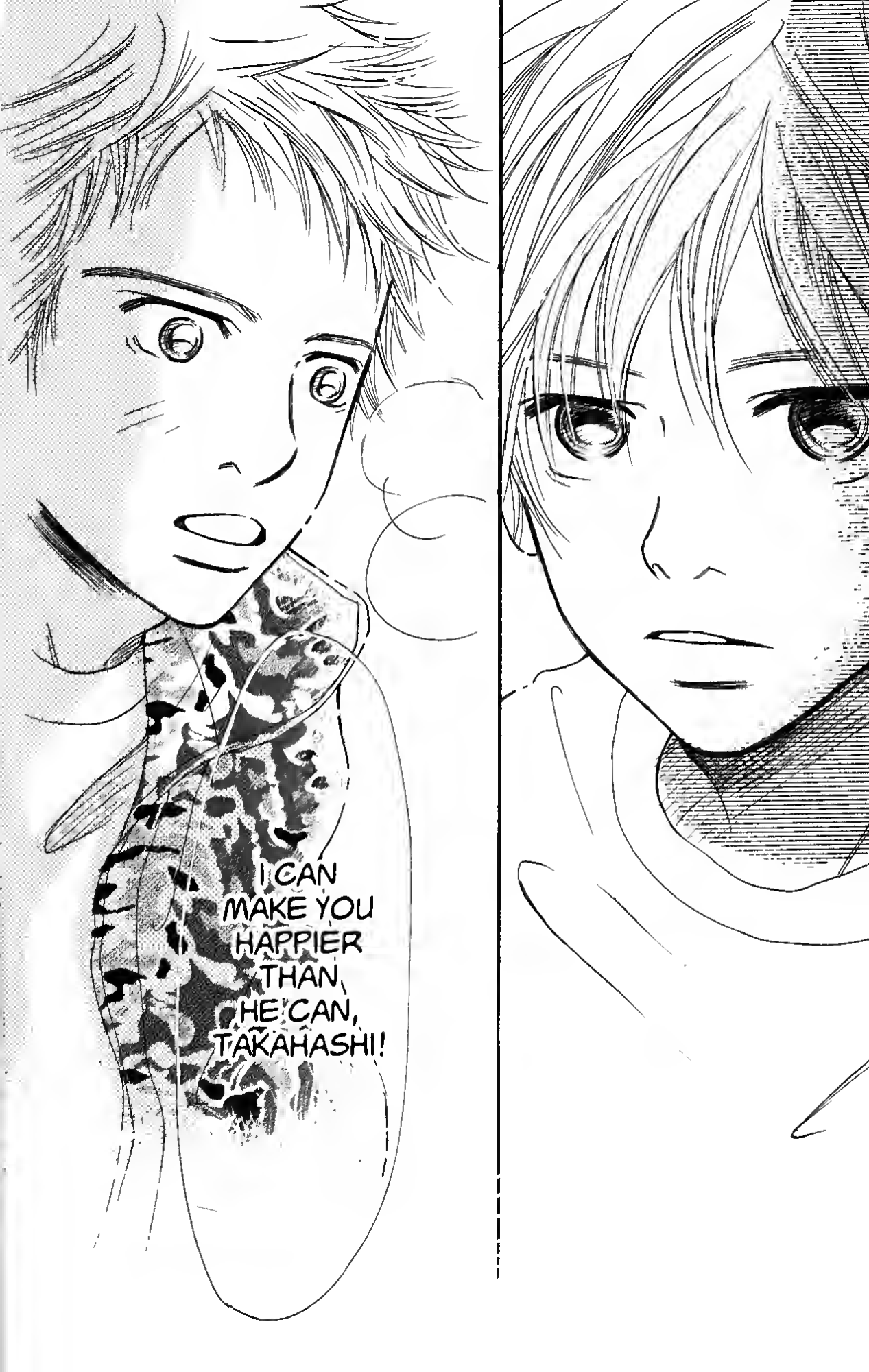
...
YOU...
...FEEL VULNERABLE?
IT'S NOT FAIR.
THEN ...
...KEEP SMILING.


SHOW ME YOUR HAPPY FACE...
BE THE USUAL TAKA-HASHI...
IF YOU DO THAT...
...YOU WON'T NEED ME.
SO WHY...
I'D ALWAYS MAKE YOU SMILE.
...ARE YOU CRYING?
IS HE MAKING YOU HAPPY?
I'D ALWAYS BE NEAR.
ARE YOU HAPPY?
IF YOU'RE NOT...
...WHY STAY IN THE RELATION-SHIP?
I'D FIND YOU BEFORE YOU COULD LOOK FOR ME.


IF YOU CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT...
I GUESS IT MEANS YOU DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT TO DO IT, HUH?
THERE'S...
...ONE MOTIVE THAT WILL JUSTIFY IT.
I'D DO EVERY-THING YOU WANT.

I CAN MAKE TAKAHASHI HAPPIER THAN HE CAN.
SWUM
THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT, MOTOHARU.
WHAT?
I KNOW IT'S NOT A GOOD TIME...
tok tok
...BUT YOU'RE HARDLY EVER HOME, SO...

I'M THINKING ABOUT...
...GETTING A DIVORCE.

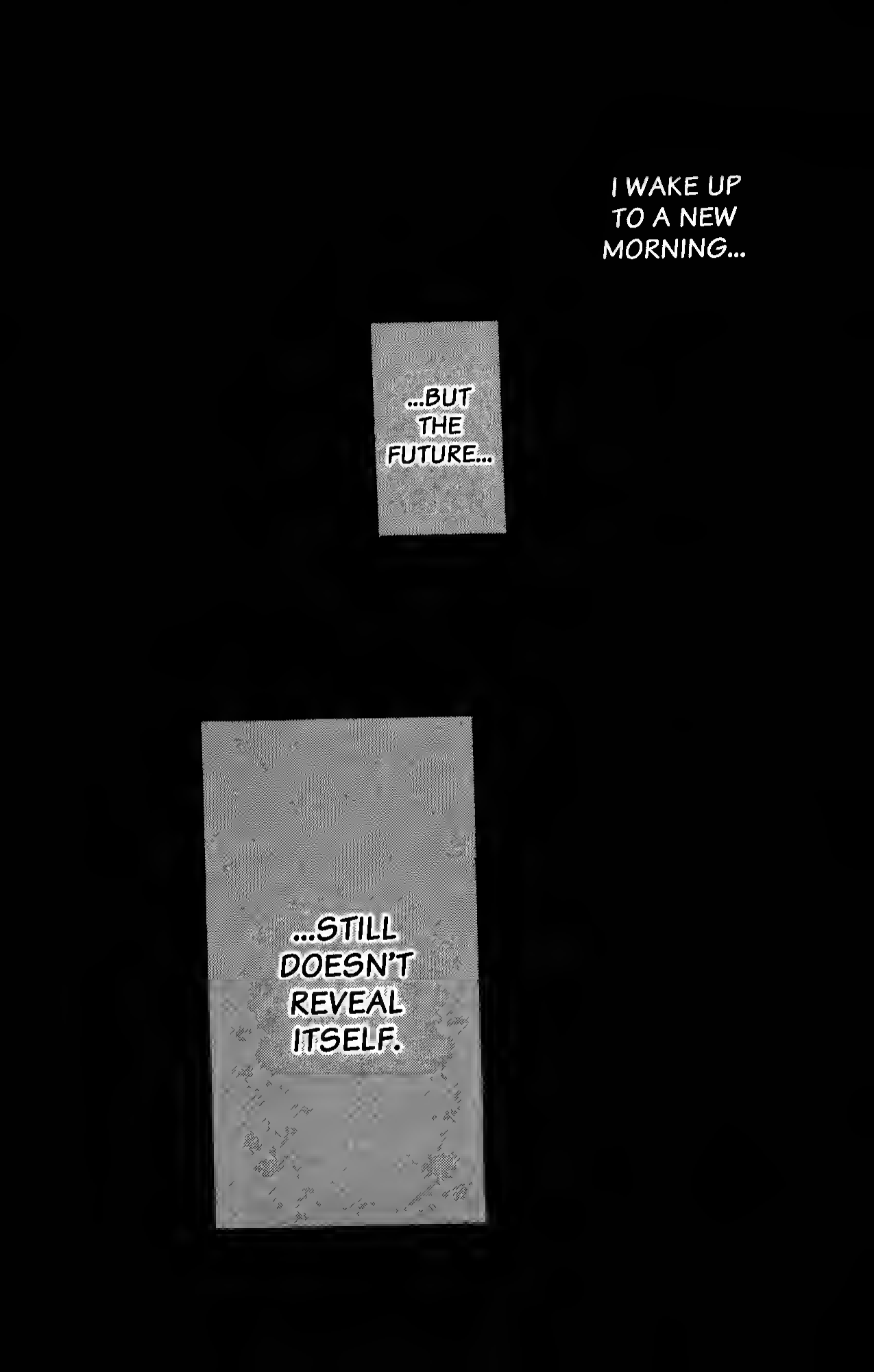

I CAN MAKE YOU HAPPIER THAN HE CAN, TAKAHASHI!

ACTUALLY I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT FOR ABOUT A YEAR NOW...
I JUST COULDN'T MAKE UP MY MIND.
BUT A MONTH AGO, I GOT A PHONE CALL FROM AN OLD FRIEND...
YOU PROBABLY KNOW HER TOO—THE ONE WHO USED TO BE A STYLIST.
I CAN'T JUST STAND BY ANYMORE.

IT'S TIME TO STOP BEING SAD AND TROUBLED.
SHE ASKED ME IF I WOULD HELP WITH HER WORK...
THE BIGGEST WORRY I HAD WAS IF I'D BE ABLE TO FIND A JOB AT MY AGE...
IT'S AN OPPOR-TUNITY FOR ME...
GOING OUT WITH SOME-ONE...
...SHOULD BE MORE FUN, RIGHT?
I DON'T WANT TO PASS IT UP.

I WANT TO PROTECT YOU, TAKAHASHI.
ARE YOU GOING TO TOKYO?

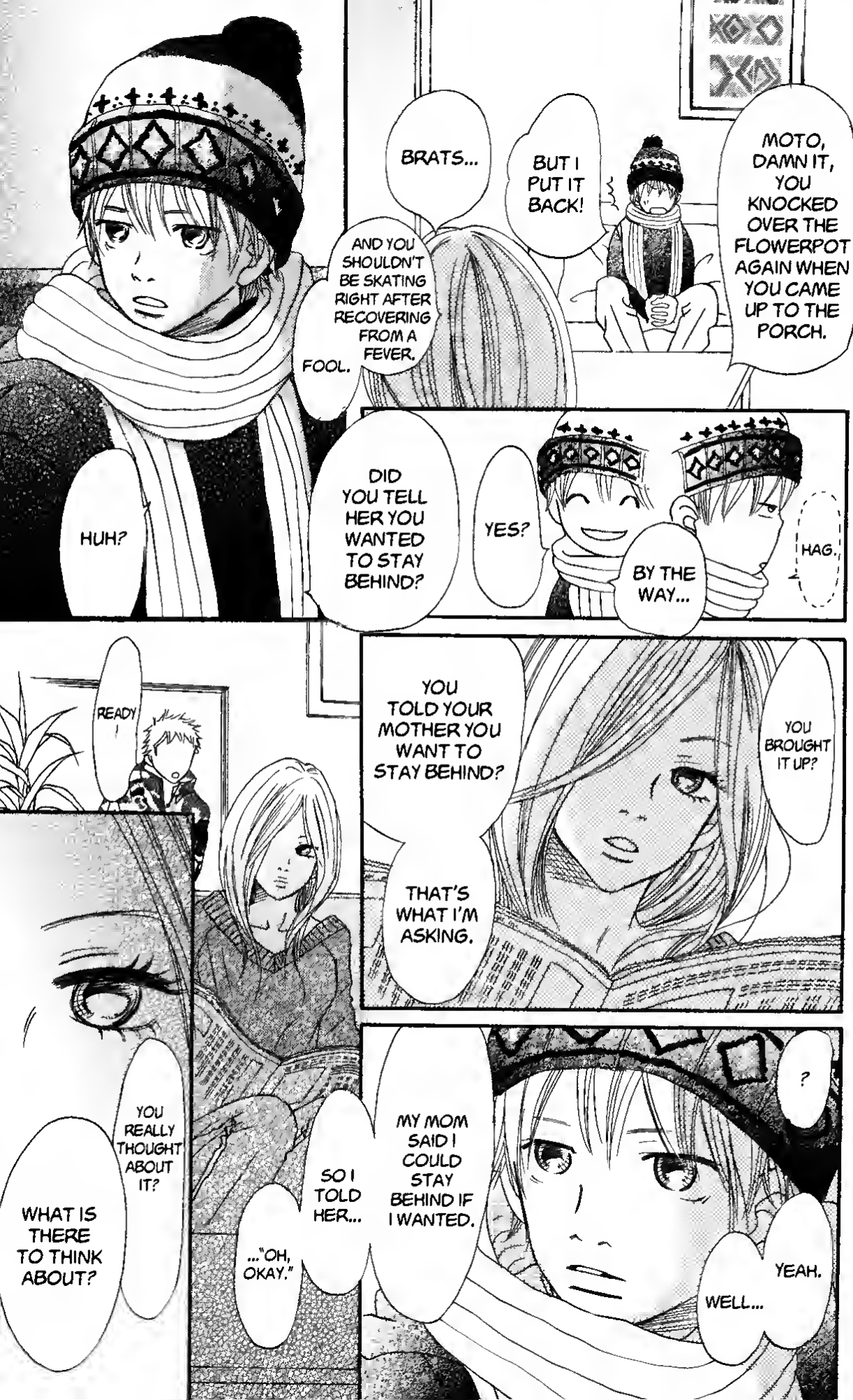
EVERY
NIGHT I FALL
ASLEEP
WITH THE
SAME WISH.


I WAKE UP TO A NEW MORNING...
...BUT THE FUTURE...
...STILL DOESN'T REVEAL ITSELF.

SHE'LL BE MOVING TO TOKYO BY THE END OF THE YEAR.
FATYO3
A DIVORCE?
TOKYO ...
YOU HAVE TO CHANGE SCHOOLS ?!
HUH?
I'M NOT GOING.
WHAT?

Chapter 27

I'VE ONLY GOT A YEAR UNTIL I GRADUATE...
...AND I NEED TO PREPARE FOR UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAMS, SO I CAN STAY AT MY HOUSE FOR NOW.
I'LL BE GOING TO A UNIVERSITY IN TOKYO ANYWAY.
...
I SEE.
DON'T SCARE ME LIKE THAT.
PHEW
How long are you going to be...?
AND COULD YOU HURRY UP AND EAT?
MM...
LATE BREAKFAST
I'M ALMOST DONE.
...
BRATS ...
ICE SKATING.
...WHERE YOU OFF TO ON A SUNDAY MORNING?
THE CRAPPY RINK AT OUR SCHOOL IS TOO BUMPY.
HUH. THEY SURE ARE ENERGETIC...
The blades get caught.
GULK
YEAH, IT'S FRUSTRATING, ISN'T IT?
KRRK
I'm done.
OKAY.
TMP
TMP
MASA, DON'T YOU DARE LEAVE WITHOUT WASHING UP.
GEH.
MASA ...
THE SUN WILL SET SOON...
Move your ass.


MOTO, DAMN IT, YOU KNOCKED OVER THE FLOWERPOT AGAIN WHEN YOU CAME UP TO THE PORCH.
BUT I PUT IT BACK!
BRATS...
AND YOU SHOULDN'T BE SKATING RIGHT AFTER RECOVERING FROM A FEVER.
FOOL.
HUH?
DID YOU TELL HER YOU WANTED TO STAY BEHIND?
YES?
BY THE WAY...
HAG.
READY!
YOU TOLD YOUR MOTHER YOU WANT TO STAY BEHIND?
YOU BROUGHT IT UP?
THAT'S WHAT I'M ASKING.
YOU REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT IT?
WHAT IS THERE TO THINK ABOUT?
SO I TOLD HER...
..."OH, OKAY."
MY MOM SAID I COULD STAY BEHIND IF I WANTED.
?
YEAH. WELL...

I CONFESSED MY FEELINGS TO TAKAHASHI.
HEY...
HMM.
...SO WHY WOULD I WANT TO GO?
MY GIRL-FRIEND IS HERE...
WHAT?
I WANTED TO TELL YOU SOME-THING TODAY, BUT...

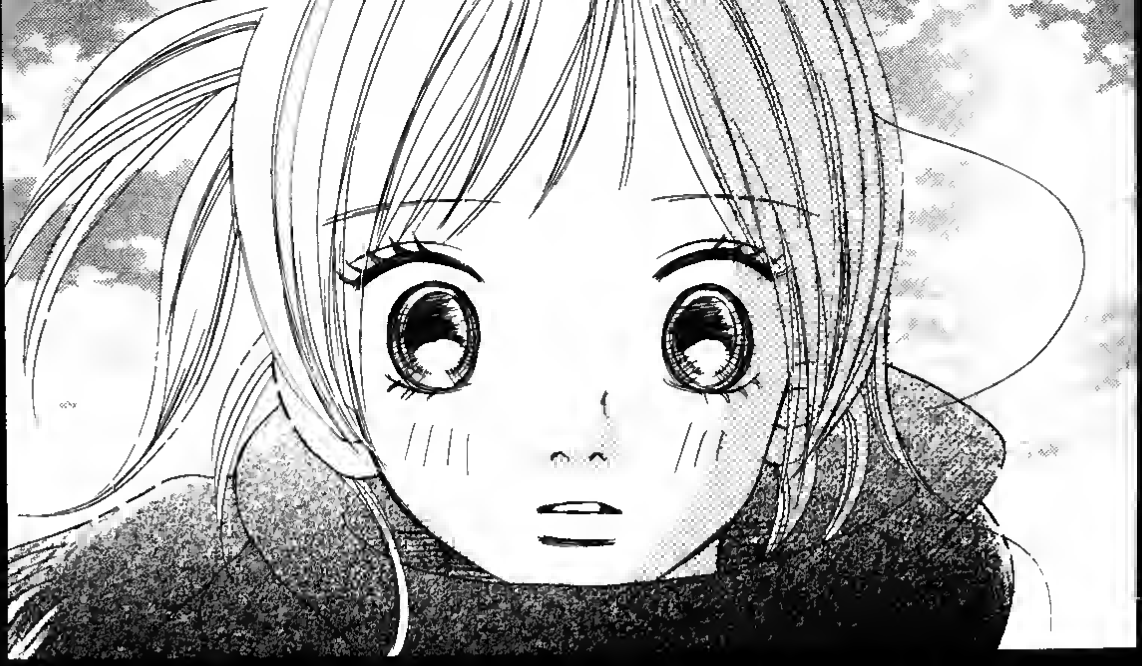
WHEN...?
TWO DAYS AGO.
...
THAT WAS DIRTY.
RIGHT WHEN I WAS SICK...
YEAH ...
DIRTY TRICKS ARE MY SPECIALTY.

SORRY.
I'M GOING HOME.
DON'T ...
...JUMP TO CONCLU-SIONS.
...
...
DON'T YOU WANT TO KNOW ...
...WHAT SHE SAID?
THMP

THINK ABOUT IT...
WOULD I BE ICE SKATING WITH ANOTHER GUY ON A NICE SUNDAY MORNING LIKE THIS IF I HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL?
I'VE KNOWN YOU SINCE THE SIXTH GRADE.
DON'T TREAT ME LIKE A FOOL!
HEY!
...
EH? YOU'RE BACK AL-READY?
WELL...

I TOLD HIM I CONFESSED MY FEELINGS TO TAKAHASHI...
HE GOT SO ANGRY...
Why?
KYAAAAAAH
WH...
WHAT?
?
...
Now you too...
WELL DONE!
BA HA HA
FOR REAL?!
HA HA HA!
IT'S THE SAME AS BEFORE— NOTHING HAS CHANGED.
NOTHING CAME OF IT.
Man, both of you
ARE YOU ASSUMING I WAS SUCCESSFUL?
You should realize this anyway but...
BUT I SHOULD SAY...
BUT SHE DIDN'T REJECT YOU OUTRIGHT EITHER, DID SHE?

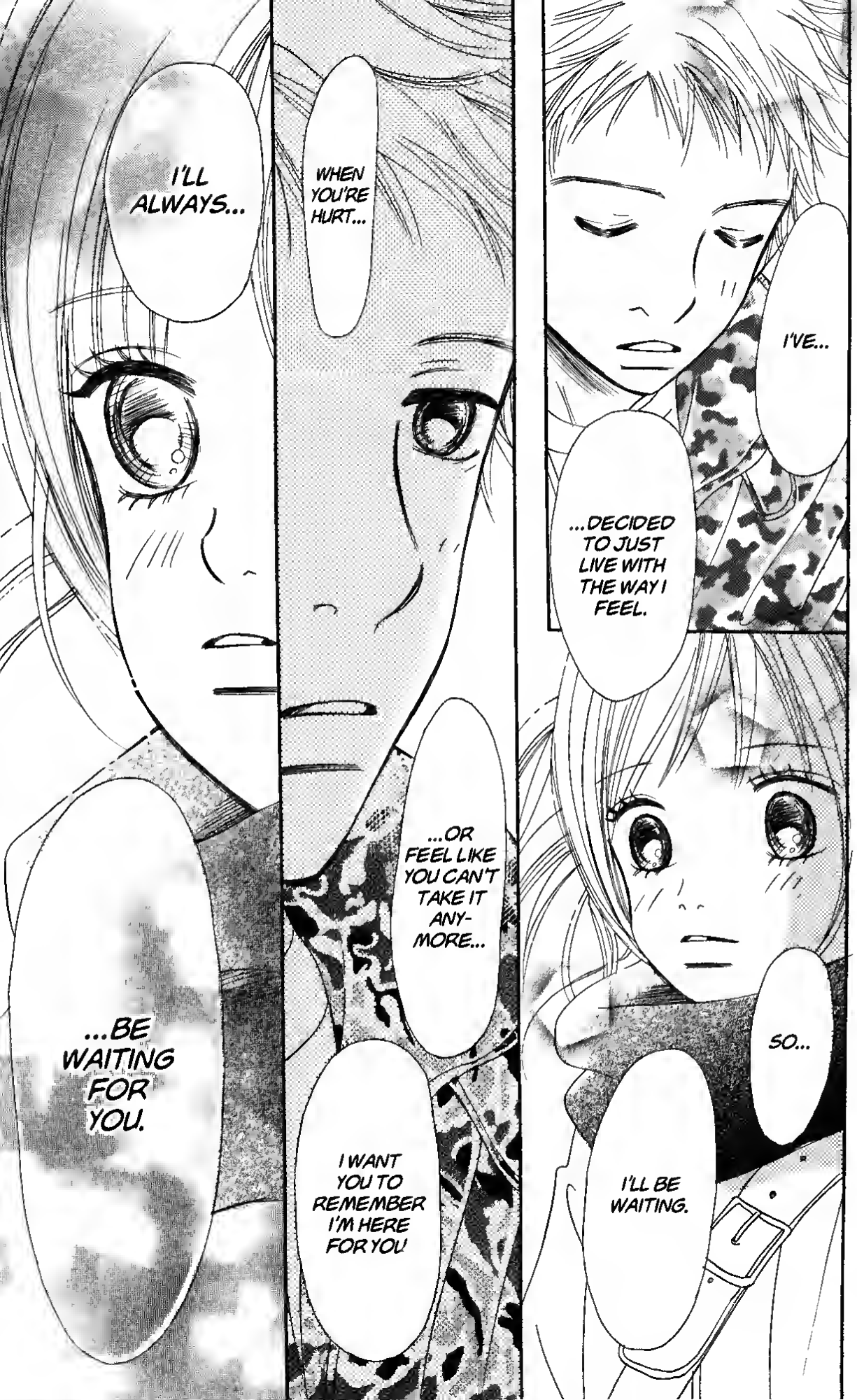
...
HOW ...
...YOU'VE NEVER PICKED A FIGHT YOU DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE OF WINNING.
BECAUSE EVER SINCE YOU WERE A KID...
...DID YOU KNOW?
...
I SEE...
NO WONDER MOTO...
...PAN-ICKED.
AND?
HOW DID YOU...
...CONFESS TO HER?
I WANT TO PROTECT YOU, TAKAHASHI.



AH!
UH...
...
DON'T GIVE ME AN ANSWER NOW!!

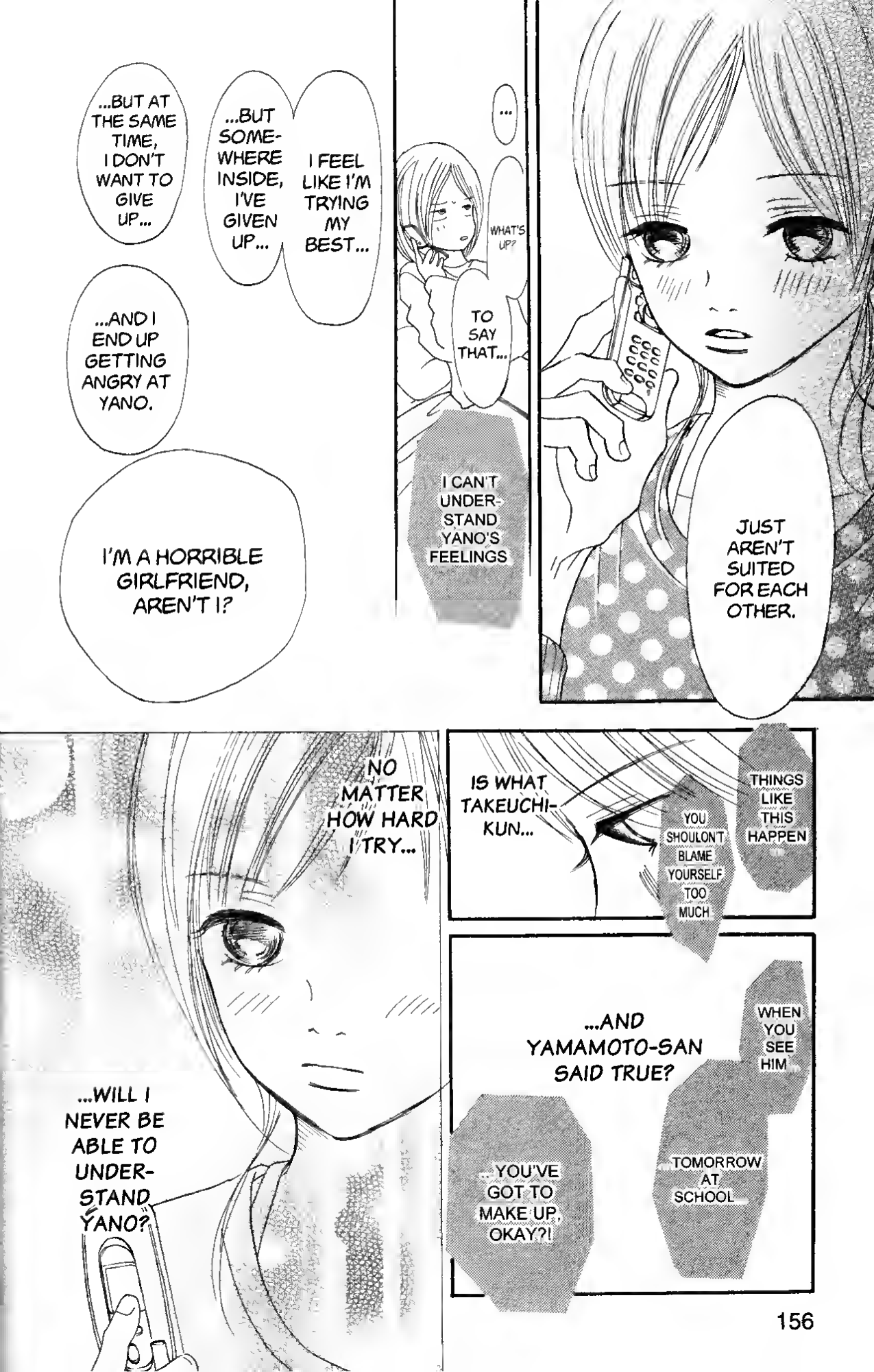
I'M NOT TELLING YOU THIS TO CRASH AND BURN.
I'M SERIOUS ABOUT THIS...
AND EVEN IF IT DOESN'T WORK OUT, IT DOESN'T MEAN I'LL STOP LIKING YOU.

HUH?
I'LL... MEAN ...
...ONLY TAKE YES FOR AN ANSWER.


I'VE...
...DECIDED TO JUST LIVE WITH THE WAY I FEEL.
SO...
I'LL BE WAITING.
WHEN YOU'RE HURT...
...OR FEEL LIKE YOU CAN'T TAKE IT ANY-MORE...
I WANT YOU TO REMEMBER I'M HERE FOR YOU
I'LL ALWAYS...
...BE WAITING FOR YOU.

SKRTCH
SKRTCH
I'LL ALWAYS BE WAITING FOR YOU.
TAKEUCHI-KUN...
I DIDN'T WANT TO HURT HIM...
IN THE FIRST PLACE...
IT JUST ISN'T POSSIBLE.
DON'T GIVE ME AN ANSWER NOW!!
I'M GLAD HE SAID THAT...
I'LL ALWAYS BE WAITING FOR YOU.
BUT THEN HE SAID...

BLEEP
Ah!
MIZU-CHIN?
NANA, HAVE YOU MADE UP WITH YANO?
NO.
NOT YET...
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
WHAT?
BUT DIDN'T YOU GO OVER TO HIS HOUSE?
NO.
I DIDN'T GO.
THEN YOU HAVEN'T BEEN IN CONTACT WITH HIM AT ALL?
NO...
HUH?
I DON'T KNOW.
MIZU-CHIN, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
I'M SO CON-FUSED.
DID SOME-THING ELSE HAPPEN?
...
NO.
...
MAYBE YANO AND I...


...BUT AT THE SAME TIME, I DON'T WANT TO GIVE UP...
...BUT SOMEWHERE INSIDE, I'VE GIVEN UP...
I FEEL LIKE I'M TRYING MY BEST...
...AND I END UP GETTING ANGRY AT YANO.
I'M A HORRIBLE GIRLFRIEND, AREN'T I?
...
WHAT'S UP?
TO SAY THAT...
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND YANO'S FEELINGS
JUST AREN'T SUITED FOR EACH OTHER.
NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY...
...WILL I NEVER BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND YANO?
IS WHAT TAKEUCHI-KUN...
YOU SHOULDN'T BLAME YOURSELF TOO MUCH
THINGS LIKE THIS HAPPEN
...AND YAMAMOTO-SAN SAID TRUE?
...YOU'VE GOT TO MAKE UP, OKAY?!
TOMORROW AT SCHOOL
WHEN YOU SEE HIM

slap
slap
IT'S NOT TRUE!
IF I LOSE HOPE I'VE ALREADY LOST!!
IF I LOSE HOPE...
sniff
sniff

UGH!
NO WAY.
It's too cold.
P.E. SNOW SHOVEL!!
PUT ON LAYERS.
Bundle up
IT SUCKS TO HAVE P.E. FIRST THING IN THE MORNING.
I WANT TO BE STRONGER.
KRRK
OH.
GOOD MOR—
LET'S GO.
YEAH.

TAKAHASHI.
LONG TIME NO SEE.
OH.
I JUST IGNORED HIM.
AH...
WHEN I SAID "LONG TIME NO SEE"...
...I WASN'T TRYING TO BE SARCAS-TIC.
YOU KNOW...
...JUST BECAUSE MY GIRLFRIEND DIDN'T COME VISIT ME WHEN I WAS OUT SICK FOR THREE DAYS...
...
...AND I FELT REALLY MISER-ABLE...
HEY.
...
...HEART...
AFTER ALL...
THAT DOESN'T BOTHER ME AT ALL.
I'VE GOT A VERY BIG...
tmp
tmp

I CAN'T.
I'M SCARED TO TALK TO YANO.
TAKA-HASHI.
I...
IT'S ENOUGH ALREADY!
STOP MAKING ME FEEL MISERABLE!
WAIT UP!
HA HA
IT'S BEGUN.
OH.
HA HA HA
YANO!
ARE YOU PLAYING TAG?
Ack!
I'M..
HUFF
HUFF
...BARELY OVER THAT COLD...
DAMN IT.
HEEZE
HEEZE
SO WHAT.
MEN ALWAYS KEEP THEIR TRUE FEELINGS HIDDEN IN PUBLIC.
LISTEN UP.
I'M GOING TO TELL YOU MY TRUE FEELINGS NOW.
NOW YOU'RE CONTRA-DICTING WHAT YOU JUST SAID.

AND I DON'T LIKE TO CHASE YOU AROUND.
YOU'VE GOT TO TALK TO ME LIKE YOU ALWAYS DO.
...NOR DID YOU CALL OR EVEN SEND A TEXT...
YOU DIDN'T COME VISIT ME...
I WAS REALLY LONELY.
NO MATTER HOW ANGRY YOU MAY BE...
I FELT LIKE A WATER FLEA OR SOME-THING.
I WAS TRULY MISER-ABLE.
...I DIDN'T DESERVE THAT.
"YES."
"I'M SORRY TOO."
THAT'S ALL I HAVE TO SAY TO MAKE UP.
...
WILL YOU TALK TO ME?
PLEASE ...
BUT...

YOU THINK I'M A BAD GIRLFRIEND, DON'T YOU?
TAKA-HASHI...
YANO...
...TELL ME THE TRUTH.
...EVEN WANT TO MAKE UP WITH ME?
DO YOU...
I CAN'T STOP.
...HOW TO PUT IT.
AREN'T YOU...
I DON'T KNOW...
...TIRED OF GOING OUT WITH ME?
I'M INSECURE.
MAYBE WE'RE NOT MEANT FOR EACH OTHER.
BUT...
THAT'S NOT WHY.

TELL ME...
IT'S NOT TRUE, IS IT?
...THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE WHO IS MORE COMPATIBLE...
I UNDER-STAND HIM A WHOLE LOT BETTER THAN YOU.
MAYBE ...
NO.
SOME-ONE ELSE...
...I'M WRONG.
...WHO IS MORE COMPAT-IBLE...?
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?
I TOLD YOU NOTHING HAP-PENED.

SO YOU'RE SAYING...
...YOU HAVE SOMEONE ELSE?
I DIDN'T...
...SAY THAT...
THERE'S SOMEONE I WANT TO MARRY.
YOU DID...
NOW I CAN FINALLY FORGET THAT MAN.
MY ONLY HAPPINESS IS TO SEE YOU GROW UP. I HOPE YOU BECOME A GREAT SWIMMER LIKE YOUR FATHER.
YOU LOOK JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER, MOTOHARU.

MOTOHARU. JUST LISTEN, OKAY?
YOU'RE NOTHING BUT THE BOYFRIEND SHE DUMPED.
TWO DAYS AGO, NANA-SAN WAS RIDING IN A CAR WITH KAGAWA AND...
I CON-FESSED MY FEELINGS TO TAKAHASHI.
YOU JUST SAID IT!
WHY IS IT...
...THAT WHAT YOU SAY ONLY MAKES ME MORE INSECURE?

I CAN'T HANDLE ...
...ANY MORE OF THIS.
WHY CAN'T WE...
...CLEAR UP A SIMPLE...
...MISUNDER-STANDING?
TAKA-HASHI!

MOTO-HARU.
MOTO-HARU.
COULD YOU COME HELP ME IF YOU'RE AWAKE?
OR IS IT HARD ...
...BE-CAUSE IT'S SO SIMPLE ?

I'VE NOTICED THIS FOR SOME TIME NOW...
YOU'RE NOT GOOD AT PLANNING THINGS OUT, ARE YOU?
WHAT?
YOU BOUGHT A TON OF ROSE SEEDLINGS LAST SPRING...
...AND YOU'VE WAITED UNTIL THE GROUND FROZE TO PLANT THEM...
THE GROUND IS FROZEN! I CAN'T GET THE SHOVEL IN.
SWNK
GEH...
OH WELL, I GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT.
I WANT YOU TO DIG OUT THE PLANTS AROUND THERE IN SPRING AND SEND THEM TO ME.
HUH?!
HAVE YOU REALLY BEEN PLANNING FOR A YEAR TO GET A DIVORCE?
...WITHOUT THINKING ABOUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE...
MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND NOW DIGGING UP PLANTS...
YOU NEVER THINK AHEAD. YOU JUST GRAB WHAT YOU WANT...
YOU'RE SO IRRESPONSIBLE.
IT CAN'T BE HELPED ...
GARDENING IS MY ONLY PLEASURE.

I WAS TALKING ABOUT THE PLANTS...
I DIDN'T JUST THOUGHT-LESSLY...
...GIVE BIRTH TO YOU, YOU KNOW.
I...
JOU
?!
D...
DON'T CRY!
She's crazy to try growing these on the porch.
These are covered in thorns.
MABE MABE
Urgh!
I DON'T BLAME YOU.
NOT AT ALL.
I KNOW THAT.
WHEN I TOLD YOU I WANTED TO GET MARRIED, YOU FOLLOWED ME WITHOUT COMPLAINT.
...YOU BLAME ME FOR EVERY-THING.
IT FEELS LIKE...
...THIS MORN-ING.
I'M JUST IN A BAD MOOD...
I'M SORRY.

THIS IS GUILT FROM MY PAST SINS, HUH...
THERE'S SOMEONE I WANT TO MARRY.
YOU NEVER RAISED A FUSS...
IF IT...
...WILL MAKE YOU HAPPY, MOM.
ACTUALLY, I WAS PRETTY THOUGHT-LESS...
...WHEN I GAVE BIRTH TO YOU.
I'VE GOT A CONFES-SION TO MAKE.
YOU'D BETTER BE HAPPY THIS TIME.

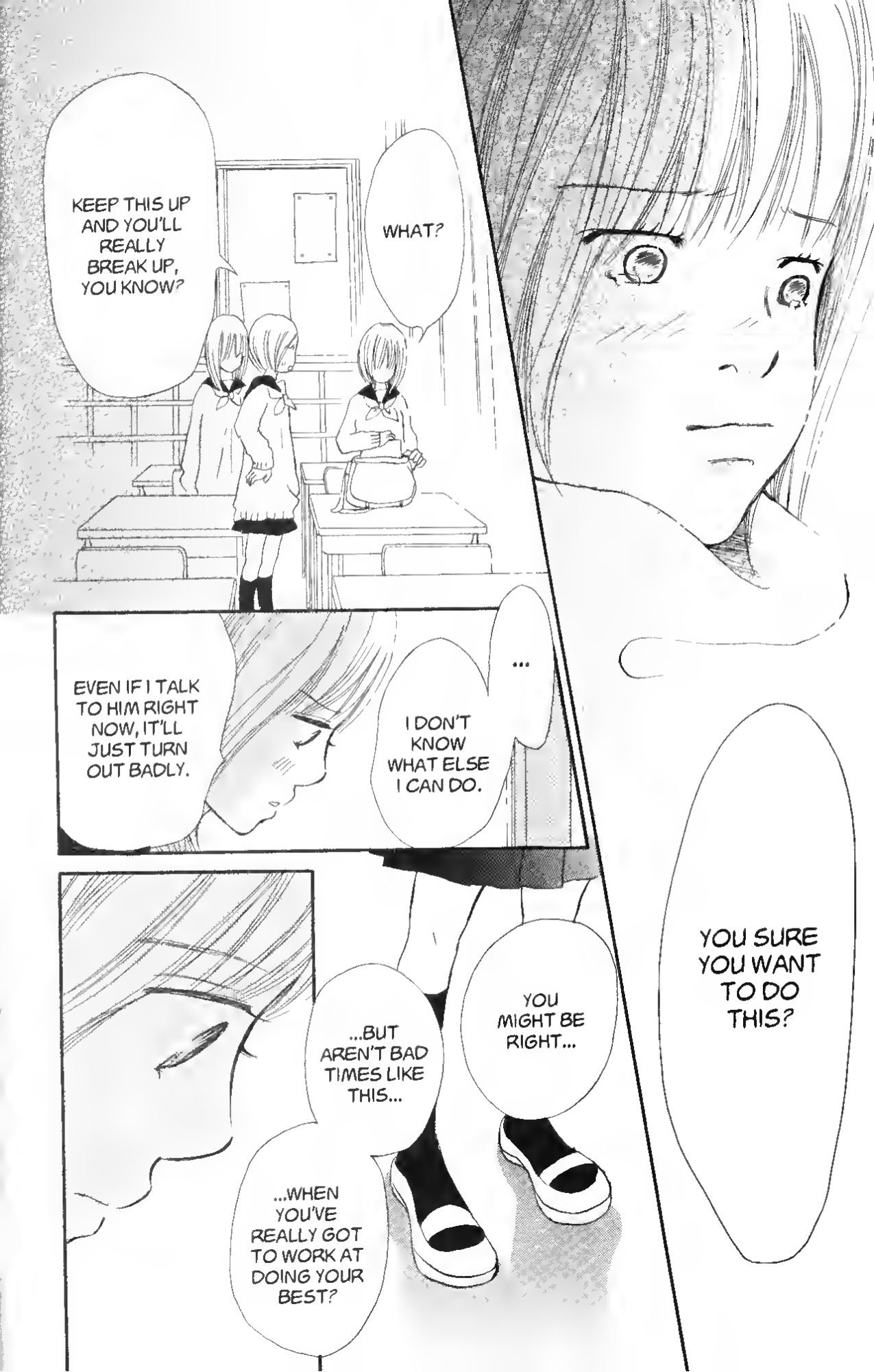
...
HUH?
Not that it surprises me.
I NEVER EXPECTED TO GET PREGNANT.
HUH.
I NEVER EVEN WANTED A CHILD.
HUH.
BUT I WAS TOO SCARED TO GET AN ABORTION...
PWIK
PWIK
...
I'VE DONE NOTHING BUT MAKE MISTAKES...
I NEVER THINK.
I NEVER PLAN ANYTHING.
YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT ME.
I'M A COMPLETE FAILURE AS A PERSON AND A MOTHER.
I DON'T EVEN TRY TO FIND HAPPINESS ANYMORE.
I ADMIT THAT FOR A MOMENT I THOUGHT HE'D DIVORCE HIS WIFE WHEN HE FOUND OUT I WAS PREGNANT...
Things are never that simple.
Of course he wouldn't
THAT SUCKS.
I WASN'T MARRIED, AND YOU'D BE A HINDRANCE TO MY CAREER...
I DIDN'T HAVE ANY OTHER CHOICE, DID I?
...BUT I HAD TO GIVE BIRTH TO YOU.
THEN WHY ARE YOU GETTING A DIVORCE?
SO I CAN LEARN TO STAND ON MY OWN TWO FEET THIS TIME.

BUT...
...AND I REGRETTED IT AT FIRST, BUT...
AT FIRST I THOUGHT IT WAS A MIS-TAKE...
...WAS A SUC-CESS.
ONE THING...
MOTO-HARU.
YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?
42.
HOW OLD ARE YOU AGAIN?
I'M SO HAPPY THAT I GAVE BIRTH TO YOU.
I'M THANKFUL I WAS A THOUGHTLESS BITCH BACK THEN...

I DON'T NEED TO DEMAND MORE...
I'VE BEEN GRANTED MY SHARE OF HAPPI-NESS.
TAKAHASHI ...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING AFTER SCHOOL?
CAN I BORROW IT?
HAVE YOU SEEN THIS, NANA?
This is good.
Bye!
Bye-bye.
HA HA HA HA

I'LL GO HOME ALONE TODAY.
IF YOU DON'T HAVE PLANS, WANT TO GO HOME TOGETHER?
NANA!
KRRK
THAT WAS...
WIP

STAY AWAY FROM ME!
KLAK
YA—


KEEP THIS UP AND YOU'LL REALLY BREAK UP, YOU KNOW?
WHAT?
EVEN IF I TALK TO HIM RIGHT NOW, IT'LL JUST TURN OUT BADLY.
...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT ELSE I CAN DO.
YOU SURE YOU WANT TO DO THIS?
...BUT AREN'T BAD TIMES LIKE THIS...
YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT...
...WHEN YOU'VE REALLY GOT TO WORK AT DOING YOUR BEST?

YOU ACT LIKE THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
KUKU
YOU ALWAYS HAVE.
BUT JUST BECAUSE YANO KEEPS COMING AFTER YOU NOW...
...DO YOU SERIOUSLY THINK HE'LL KEEP DOING IT FOREVER?
IF YOU KEEP SHUTTING YANO OUT...
...IT'S GOING TO BE TOO LATE, YOU KNOW?
LOOK OUT THE WINDOW.

SEE?
YANO!

HUFF
HUFF
OH.
SWUP
!
slip
THMP

DO YOU SERI-OUSLY THINK HE'LL KEEP DOING IT...
JUST BE-CAUSE YANO KEEPS COMING AFTER YOU NOW...

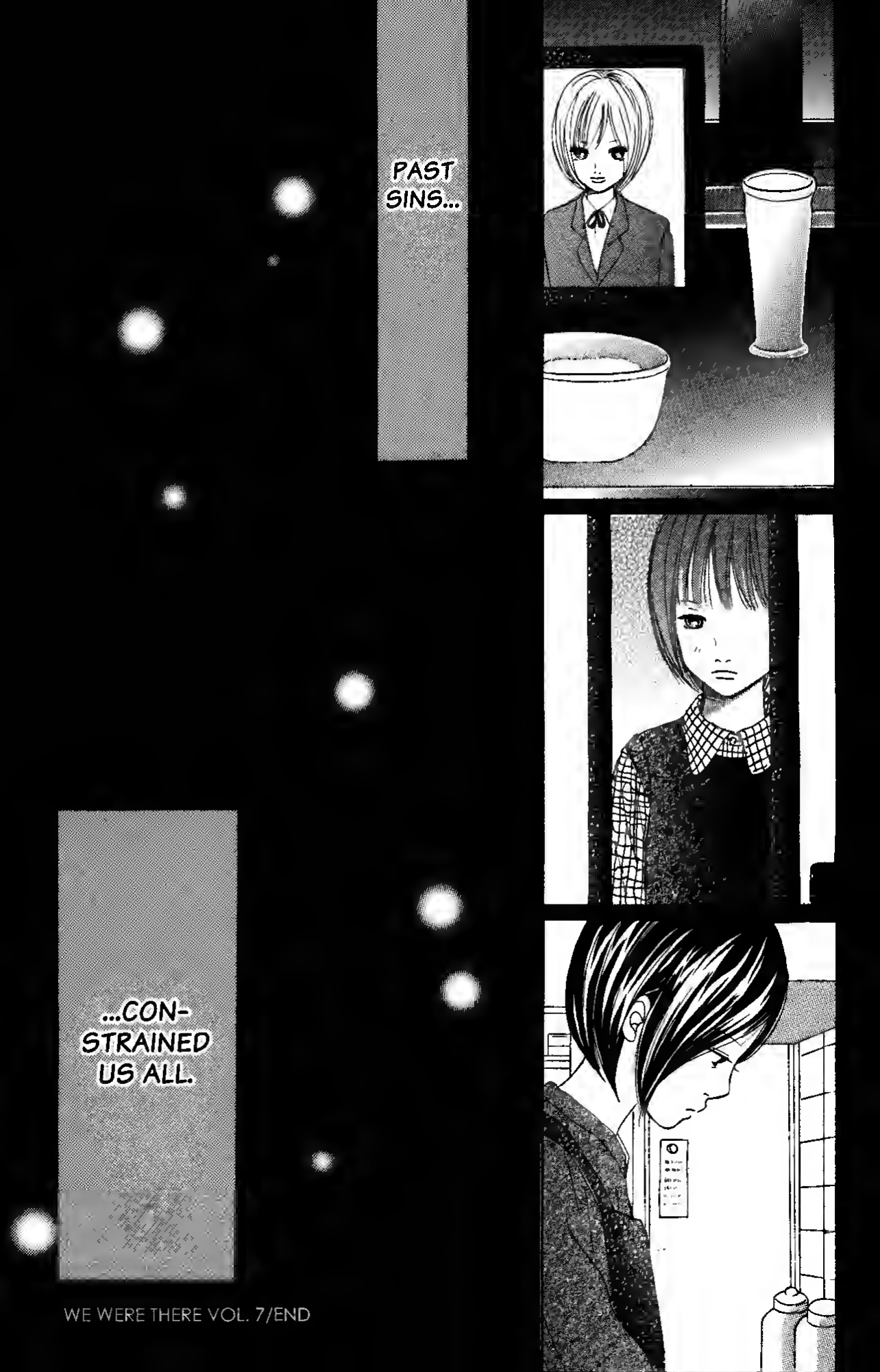
...FOR-
EVER?

MIZU-CHIN'S WORDS ECHO IN MY EARS.

I'M SORRY.
LET ME COR-RECT IT...
TOO LATE.
...
WHAT I SAID TO YOU...
...TWO YEARS AGO.
WHAT?

I ACCUSED YOU OF USING ME TO GET BACK AT MY SISTER.
I KNOW IT WASN'T TO GET BACK AT HER...
YOU SYMPA-THIZED WITH ME.

WHAT-EVER IT WAS...
...IT WAS STILL THE WORST THING TO DO.


PAST SINS...
...CON-STRAINED US ALL.

Notes

Honorifics

In Japan, people are usually addressed by their name followed by a suffix. The suffix shows familiarity or respect, depending on the relationship.
Male (familiar): first or last name + kun
Female (familiar): first or last name + chan
Adult (polite): last name + san
Upperclassman (polite): last name + senpai
Teacher or professional: last name + sensei
Close friends or lovers: first name only, no suffix

Nana-chan vs. Nana-san

Nanami's nickname is "Nana-chan." Yano's ex-girlfriend was a year older, so she was known as "Nana-san."

Terms

A *gokon* is a group date.
Miho Kanno is a Japanese actress.

The series has finally reached volume 7. I am very grateful to all the fans for supporting me all this way. I hope you will continue to support me until the very end.

–Yuki Obata

Yuki Obata's birthday is January 9. Her debut manga, *Raindrops*, won the Shogakukan Shinjin Comics Taisho Kasaku Award in 1998. Her current series, *We Were There* (*Bokura ga Ita*), won the 50th Shogakukan Manga Award and was adapted into an animated television series. She likes sweets, coffee, drinking with friends, and scary stories. Her hobby is browsing in bookshops.

Shojo Beat Manga

We Were There 7

Story & Art by
Yuki Obata

Shojo Beat

We Were There 7 Yuki Obata

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Shojo Beat

I know what Yano was like before he started going out with my sister...

And what he was like after she died.

How he held the tears back and looked as if he wanted to die...

I understand him a whole lot better than you.

7 Story & Art by Yuki Obata

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